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# Saipan Tribune

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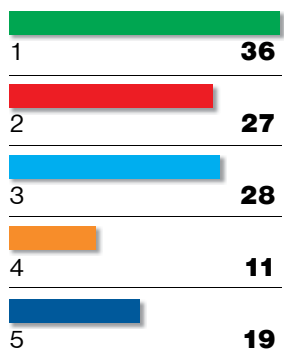
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## POLL RESULTS

On a scale of 1 to 5, with five being the highest, what's your level of confidence in the ability of the CNMI economy to recover within the next three years?



Sunday, April 19, 2009

## INSIDE

### Sharp Tack

Rita Levi Montalcini says that even though she is about to turn 100, her mind is sharper than ever.

WORLD...Page 16



### 'The Soloist'

You've probably heard about "The Soloist," or know it from the movie trailer, or the bestselling book.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

Three earthquakes hit Rota on Friday. **PAGE 2**  
Food stamps eyed for poor permanent residents. **PAGE 6**

# Rota-bound family missing at sea

Family left Guam aboard catamaran

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Navy, and the CNMI's Boating Safety responders combed several square miles of ocean yesterday to look for a missing family that reportedly departed Guam on a boat bound for Rota.

See **MISSING** on Page 4

## Delay in housing stipend for CHC doctors, nurses

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**  
haidee\_eugenio@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Commonwealth Health Center doctors and nurses hired from off-island received their housing allowance a week later than usual without any advice from the management.

The housing allowance was supposed to be provided on or before Good Friday on April 10.

See **STIPEND** on Page 4

## 26 named best performers in 2009 junior mock trial



HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

House Floor Leader Joseph Camacho, third from left, recognizes students from Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja of Rota, left, and Whispering Palms School, right, for their exemplary performance at the Annual Junior High School Mock Trial at the U.S. District Court in Garapan on Saturday.

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**  
Moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Twenty-six students from mostly private schools were named best performers in the non-competitive 2009 Junior Mock Trial held Saturday at the U.S. District Court.

Seven teams from six middle schools joined the event, which

See **MOCK TRIAL** on Page 4



### MUSHROOM CLOUD

A thick cloud of black smoke billows into the air after a huge fire engulfs junk cars in the yard of Motion Automotive Repair in Chalan Laulau Friday afternoon.

DPS PIO ERIC DAVID



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# Local

## NMC student files grievance at Governor's Office

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA  
Moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial will not respond and take any action on a grievance filed by a student with his office involving issues at the Northern Marianas College.

Press secretary Charles Reyes Jr. said the matter must be taken up with the college according to their grievance rules and procedures.

Saipan Tribune learned that NMC student Janel Villegas filed her grievance against the NMC board last March 25.

In a three-page document received by the Governor's Office, Villegas cited the "lack of respect" exhibited by board chair Charles V. Cepeda to the faculty, students, and community members when he ignored the petition of support for Agnes McPhetres during a board meet-

ing in early March.

In that meeting, Cepeda had refused to accept the 225-signature petition, saying the document should be filed with the Governor's Office, which makes the appointments to the NMC board.

This prompted Villegas to submit the grievance complaint, along with the signature petitions, to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial.

The issue came about after McPhetres resigned from the

Board of Regents on March 6, 2009. She later rescinded her decision at the behest of Fitial but the board said she cannot take it back. After three weeks of tussling over the issue, McPhetres' resignation became official.

Villegas' complaint cited that "even though the matter concerning regent McPhetres retention on the board may be over, the process, the treatment of individuals were regrettable and need to be redressed."

The chairman's refusal to hear the "voices" of students and faculty, Villegas said, was proof of the total disrespect for the students.

"It was a total mockery of NMC's slogan 'Student First,'" she said, adding that

her grievance is against the chairman's ability to lead the board and his lack of discussion and involvement of the public in board meetings.

"I have a grievance against Chairman Cepeda for not retaining a willing and experienced board member to serve during this critical time," Villegas told the governor.

Villegas said it was "embarrassing" to see the college defying the governor's directive, setting a poor example for students and staff of shared governance and community involvement.

She wants Cepeda to apologize to former regent McPhetres, the students and the faculty "whose voices were not recognized and heard on the petition."

### 'No jurisdiction'

Press secretary Reyes told

Saipan Tribune that the governor's office has no authority to address the matter involving college issues as it is governed by an independent body, which is the Board of Regents.

"The Governor's Office generally has no jurisdiction or oversight authority over NMC," he said, adding that it should be directed to the lawmakers.

"In fact, this matter might be better directed to the CNMI Legislature, which could issue subpoena and which could conduct an oversight hearing, as it has done in the past at the direction of Rep. Heinz Hofschneider," Reyes said.

The press secretary said the Fitial administration believes that the McPhetres issue has been conclusively resolved through her delivered and received resignation letter.

## 3 earthquakes hit Rota on Friday

Three earthquakes with magnitudes of 4.7, 4.9, and 5.0 on the Richter scale hit Rota Friday afternoon and evening.

The temblors did not pose a tsunami threat to the Marianas and no damage to property or injuries were reported, said Emergency Management Office acting director Mark S. Pangelinan.

Saipan Tribune talked with many Rota residents yesterday who said they did not feel the earthquakes.

Rota resident Dolores R. Agulto said she was pushing a baby walker Friday afternoon when she saw the walker rocking. She said she was not even aware that there were earthquakes.

Some Rota store employees said they did not feel the earthquakes.

EMO said the first earthquake, with a magnitude of 4.7, occurred at 4:17pm at a depth of 6 miles. It was centered about 80 miles west-southwest of Saipan and

130 miles southwest of Anatahan.

The second one at 4.9 magnitude occurred at 9:19pm at a depth of 65 miles northwest of Rota. This time, it was centered about 85 miles west-southwest of Saipan and 130 miles southwest of Anatahan.

The last one at 5.0 magnitude happened at 9:50pm at a depth of 65 miles northwest of Rota, about 90 miles southwest of Saipan and 130 miles southwest of Anatahan. (Ferdie de la Torre)

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# What's cooking this week at

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# CEC to set up voter registration at Price Costco

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA  
Moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

An outreach center that will help boost voter participation in this year's general election will open next week, according to the Commonwealth Election Commission.

Starting on the first Saturday of May, a commission employee will be deployed to Price Costco to conduct special registration for community members who may not be able to visit the Capital Hill office due to work.

John L. Takai, the commission's outreach logistic coordinator, said the center will run every Saturday until Sept. 12—or the last Saturday prior to the registration deadline set for Sept. 18.

Takai disclosed that the outreach program every election year yields about 15 percent of the projected CNMI voters.

This year, he said, they are expecting some 2,000 potential voters to register at the Price Costco.

Latest figures of the commission show that there are 13,104

total registered voters, excluding the 209 new voters it recorded since February.

The number is expected to jump by July when fresh graduates and new voters troop to the commission to register.

Takai said they also encour-

age failed voters in the 2007 general election to come forward and be counted in the November polls.

There were 3,420 failed voters in the last general election.

Takai said the biggest voter turnouts usually happen

during gubernatorial races, where up to more than 15,000 citizens exercise their right to choose their leaders.

"But this year, we're seeing more," Takai told *Saipan Tribune*, noting the number of failed voters and new graduates who will soon register.

Past gubernatorial elections normally yielded an 80 percent

overall voters' turnout, including absentee ballots.

The outreach center at Price Costco will open every Saturday from 9am through 3pm.

The last day of registration at the commission office is on Sept. 18.

Candidates have until Sept. 23 to turn in their nomination and petition to the commission.

## Kaipat says Labor is helping alien workers with US citizen children

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE  
ferdie\_deltorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Department of Labor Deputy Secretary Cinta Kaipat said they are helping alien workers who have U.S. citizen children in getting transfer extensions.

In her progress report on the implementation of the Labor Reform Law, Kaipat said on occasion they give transfer extensions to alien workers who are in "hardship cases."

"For example, the parents would be required to take their U.S. citizen children out of school near the end of the school term," Kaipat said.

She said they also sometimes give transfer extensions to skilled workers whose prospective employers need time to get the transfer papers together and secure the necessary bonding.

The deputy secretary noted that their success in placing U.S. citizens in jobs and disqualifying unfit employers have result-

ed in extensions of transfers for some workers.

"If a worker is displaced because a U.S. citizen applied for the job and was hired, then the foreign worker gets another chance to transfer. If we did not do this, we would have less success in getting foreign workers to help train their U.S. citizen successors," Kaipat said.

If a worker finds a transfer employer but Labor disqualifies this employer for reasons that are not the worker's fault, then the worker gets another chance to transfer, she said.

If Labor did not do this, she said, the department would have less success in keeping workers out of the underground economy.

Kaipat claims they manage the transfer process carefully.

"Every transfer has to be approved in the Administrative Hearing Office and every employer has to be approved by the Director of Labor," she added.



Kaipat

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**BRUCE L. MAILMAN** is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and has provided immigration services in the CNMI since 1989

**MAYA B. KARA** is a former CNMI Acting Attorney General, Chief Legislative Counsel, Governor's and Lt. Governor's Legal Counsel and DOL Hearing Officer

# From 86 in 2006, Labor reduces staff to 46

From 86 staff in 2006, the Department of Labor now only has 46 personnel beginning 2008.

Labor Deputy Secretary Cinta Kaipat said they have decreased staffing from 86 in 2006 to 72 in 2007 and 46 in 2008.

At the same time, Kaipat said, they have increased Labor's au-

tomation system and expanded its website so that service to the community will not suffer.

She said Labor is a revenue-generating agency so it is important that budget cuts not adversely affect revenue collections.

"If we are slowed down in

our administrative process by lack of staff, we are also slowed down in our revenue generation for the Commonwealth Treasury," she added.

Kaipat said they have reorganized and cut down positions through their own processes.

"Hopefully, we will not be

bundled with agencies that have resisted change and were subjected to arbitrary cuts," she said.

Labor, the deputy secretary said, is working hard to get into compliance with the 2009 budget recently enacted by the Legislature. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

## VILLAGOMEZ TRIAL ENTERS ITS 15TH DAY TODAY

### Closing arguments may begin later this week

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
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REPORTER

Closing arguments may commence in the latter part of this week in the ongoing jury trial of Lt. Gov. Timothy P. Villagomez and co-defendants James A. Santos and Joaquina V. Santos.

The U.S. government has already called to the witness stand its 24<sup>th</sup> witness—former Commonwealth Utilities Corp. executive director Anthony C. Guerrero.

Guerrero started his testimony last Thursday. As of Friday afternoon, David J. Lujan, counsel for Villagomez, was still cross-examining Guerrero.

The prosecution earlier informed the court that after Guerrero they have only a couple of witnesses. Lujan and

Ramon Quichocho, counsel for Joaquina Santos, said they will not call a witness.

Victorino Torres, counsel for James Santos, said he will call a couple of witnesses.

After Guerrero, assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley may call among the remaining witnesses Federal Bureau of Investigation special agent Dana M. McMahon.

Defense counsel, especially Lujan, are expected to conduct a lengthy cross-examination on McMahon.

Today, Monday, is the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the trial.

Villagomez and his co-defendants are charged with engaging in a conspiracy to defraud CUC of thousands of dollars via a series of needless purchases of a chemical called Rydlyme, which is used to clean engines.

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### SSHS report card day set

To all parents/ legal guardians of Saipan Southern High School students: Report cards will be issued from 4pm to 7pm in the counseling office on April 22, 2009. All students will be dismissed at 1pm. There will be a PTA meeting on the same day at 6pm in the evening in the cafeteria. *(PR)*

### An invitation to candidates

The Kagman Komunitat Association would like to invite political candidates for Governor, Senator, and Precinct 5 Representative to meet with Precinct 5 voters. Village

meetings will take place at the Kagman Community Center and voters will get the chance to meet with candidates and ask questions. Interested candidates can email kagmankomunitatassociation@gmail.com. *(PR)*

### Live fire releases on Farallon tomorrow

The U.S. military will be conducting live fire releases (13 EBS) on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla on April 21, 2009, from 1pm to 7pm.

The general location of this activity will be on the island of Farallon de Mendenilla training area (R7201) on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants.

Due to the danger imposed by this activity, the Emergency Management Office is strongly advising the public—especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators—to stay away from this area during the time and date indicated.

For more information, contact the EMO Operations Section at telephone numbers 322-9528 and 322-9529, VHF MARINE CHNL 16, and HF Single Side Band Radio on 5.205.0. *(EMO)*

### OPA to visit Rota, Tinian

Staff of the Office of the Public Auditor will be on Rota on Thursday, April 23, 2009, and

on Tinian on Friday, April 24, 2009, to notarize and accept last-minute filings of financial disclosure statements from government officials. Filers on Rota may visit the Rota Mayor's Office from 11am to 3:30pm on April 23. Filers on Tinian may visit the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission conference room from 9am to 4:30pm on April 24. All filers are reminded to bring with them some form of photo identification, such as a driver's license or a passport. Failure to do so may result in the denial of notary services. For any inquiries or comments, contact OPA at 322-6481 or 6482. *(PR)*

## MOCK TRIAL

From Page 1

was organized by the NMI Council for the Humanities.

Of the 42 official delegates, 26 were awarded certificates of excellence for effectively demonstrating their roles in this year's resolve: a first-degree murder case involving a lawyer.

Mock trial participants who were recognized for outstanding performances as attorney included Eskuelan San Francisco de Borja's Maricel Atalig; Grace Christian Academy's Peter Camacho, Angela Mamari, Anastasia Schweiger, and Glen Florendo; Tinian Junior High's Kyle Sandbergen; Rota Junior High's Mona Manglona and BriAnnie Taimanao; Whispering Palms School's Joon Ko and Christian Miller; and Mount Carmel School's Paula Castro, Andrea Manese, and Victor Cabrera.

Named outstanding witnesses were Van Cing of Eskuelan San Francisco

de Borja; GCA's Anastasia Schweiger, Crystalline Cristobal, Aira Jaye Batalones and Terence Ito; Tinian Junior High's Yunha Seo; Rota Junior High's Beda Mundo and Zahra Fraizer; WPS's Raina Klaver and Jake Lee; and MCS's Frank Villagomez, Josie Santos, and Ginny Wu.

Of the seven school teams, two were from GCA.

Scott Russell, NMI Council's program officer, said they were elated to see the first time participation of Rota and Tinian schools in the annual event.

This year, two teams backed out at the last minute—Saipan International School and Chacha Oceanview Junior High.

The event aims to provide a better understanding and appreciation of the judicial system and prepare students for the mock trial competition in high school.

Funded by a federal grant, the council intends to continue the event following the "great interest" noted from the students.

### Workshop

Before the event, the council conducted a workshop for school teams to help them prepare. The students, Russell said, were provided case materials two months prior to the "trial."

The council thanked Judge Alex Munson for allowing the use of his court for the event and lauded the participation of acting judge, Rep. Joseph Camacho, and lawyer Teresa Kin for volunteering to serve as bailiff.

"This is to allow students to come together and experience the duty of judges and lawyers, how the court functions and to get better appreciation to the court system," Camacho told *Saipan Tribune*.

During the "trial," organizers looked at the familiarity of students with the rules of evidence, how they argued and presented their points of view.

"It is important that lawyers know how to raise specific and timely objections, and how to avoid improper and unnecessary evidence," Camacho said during the trial.

Camacho has been involved in the junior mock trial since its inception four years ago. He was also a volunteer lawyer-coach to the high school mock trial.

### 'Interesting, interactive'

Four of the best trial performers are convinced that the junior mock will help them to become better persons and trial performers in the future.

For Raina Klaver, Whispering Palms School's best attorney, the event was a learning experience.

"If you want to become a lawyer, it would help you a lot. Mock trial is really interesting. It will provide us learning about the judicial system, which is very important," she told *Tribune*.

The seventh grader is the daughter of lawyer Karen Klaver, who has been involved in the mock trial competitions for many years.

"I've been involved and have been attending mock trial events since I was 2 years old...because of my mom. Over the years, I can say I have a better understanding now," she said.

Best witness Jake Lee, also of WPS, said the event—though noncompetitive—was very interactive.

"It's really a good way to interact with others and learn more about the law. By joining, we're exploring knowledge beyond the textbooks. It's fun and interesting," he said.

Grace Christian Academy's Anastasia Schweiger, also best witness awardee, believes that participation in the event develops her public speaking skills.

An active member of the National Junior Forensic League, the 14-year-old student said the event helped her compete in the Lincoln Douglas debate, which also requires public speaking skills.

Schweiger has been joining the junior mock trial for two years now.

GCA's best defense attorney, Glen Florendo, said the "trial" helped boost his confidence and self-esteem.

"All you need to do is be yourself, speak with confidence and interact with other people," he said.

Florendo has been with the mock trial since his sixth grade.

## STIPEND

From Page 1

However, the doctors hired outside the CNMI and nonresident nurses received their housing allowance checks only about 2pm on April 17.

"The check I received was dated April 8 but I received it only on April 17," said one of the nurses interviewed

during the weekend.

Another nurse said she and other CHC employees would understand a one-week delay in the housing allowance but they had hoped they would be given advice or notice of the delay.

"I think it's unfair that the management didn't give us notice that it will be delayed nor any explanation why it was delayed even after we finally received it. We were not given any

reason," she said.

Another nurse said at least two other staffers didn't receive their housing allowance as of Sunday.

DPH human resources manager Marciana D. Igitol referred *Saipan Tribune's* request for comments to Public Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez and CHC administrator Pete Untalan, who both did not return calls on Friday.

CHC nurses and doctors with dependents receive \$800 in monthly housing benefit or allowance, while those without dependents receive \$600.

Last month, Rep. Ray Yumul asked Public Auditor Michael Pai to look into allegations that some government employees are still receiving housing benefits past the sunset provision of the law granting such monthly allowance.

Yumul said on Sept. 30, 2005, Public

Law 14-91 established a sunset provision repealing the housing benefits. The provision said regulation in effect since Aug. 1, 2005 should remain in effect for not more than two years.

He added that even if employees are authorized to receive benefits notwithstanding PL 14-91, there is a five-year restriction. But Yumul said there are reports some employees are receiving benefits in excess of five years.

## MISSING

From Page 1

As of 6:45pm Sunday, the CNMI Emergency Management Office told *Saipan Tribune* that the U.S. Coast Guard has yet to report any sighting of the boat and the family.

Lee Putnam, a search and rescue specialist with the U.S. Coast Guard Guam, identified the missing persons as Ray Quichocho and his family.

Putnam clarified with the *Saipan Tribune* that Ray Quichocho is not the Saipan lawyer because he had just talked with the lawyer yesterday morning.

"Today we are using a helicopter. We are hoping to use an airplane tomorrow [Monday]," he said.

The U.S. Coast Guard Sector Guam said that Saipan's EMO notified the Rescue Sub-Center Guam that the operator of the boat, Ray Quichocho, had called Saturday evening using a cellular phone to report that he, his wife,

son, and daughter were transiting from Guam to Rota on their catamaran.

Quichocho reported that they were about 10 miles from Two Lovers Point and that one of the two engines had failed, and they were encountering big waves.

Quichocho ended the call before EMO could gather any additional information, according to the Coast Guard.

A boat from U.S. Coast Guard Station Apra Harbor was dispatched Saturday

night to investigate, but the crew was not able to locate the missing family.

Lt. Elizabeth Buendia of the U.S. Guard Guam said the Department of Public Safety on Rota reported yesterday morning that no boat had arrived from Guam the previous night.

Buendia said a transit of 44 miles should not have taken more than eight hours.

She said a helicopter from the U.S. Navy Sea Combat Squadron Two Five began an aerial search yesterday after-

noon that continued until sunset.

Buendia said they have not been able to identify Quichocho, given the limited information that he provided to Saipan EMO.

"We do not know if he is a Guam resident or a resident of the CNMI. If anyone has any additional information that could help identify this family and their planned voyage please contact the U.S. Coast Guard Rescue Sub-Center Guam at 671-355-4910 or by e-mail using RCCGuam@uscg.mil," Buendia said.

## Marianas High School opens new Building J

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**  
Moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Marianas High School inaugurated Friday a new nine-classroom building that is expected to house hundreds of students daily.

Building J's official opening came after almost a year of construction.

Principal Karen Borja said Building J's brand-new classrooms will be home to three special educational classes, five classes for freshmen students, and a cooperative class.

The lack of funding delayed the much-awaited construction and renovation of Building J until the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. approved in 2007 funding worth \$715,000 through its community development block grant.

Borja said that once the relocation of classrooms is completed, they could use the school's conference room for its intended purpose.

It was learned that affected students are currently holding classes in Building H and are forced to use the conference room and other vacant spaces. Borja estimates that about 225 students will be housed at the new wing on a daily basis.

The school was supposed to use Building J last school opening but was postponed due to construction delays.

With this project done, MHS is now looking for funds to renovate its vocational education building, which also needs major repairs.

"Like our Building J, we're looking forward to fix our vocational building next," Borja said.

In Friday's ceremony, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial said the project is important not only for MHS students and staff but for the parents and the community members as well.

The project began on April 2, 2008, and was successfully completed by Northpac Corporation, with services and supplies coming from Ginen Saipan and National Office Supply.

"MHS is the oldest public high school in the CNMI, and it needs repairs and updates. I am pleased that this successful project significantly helps MHS upgrade its facilities to support student learning," the governor said, adding that next year's graduates will be the 40th graduating class of MHS.

"It is only fitting that the government and PSS constantly strive to improve the public school environment and services for each generation of students," Fitial said. "We can accomplish this through NMHC-administered CDBG funds, and we can also accomplish this through federal stimulus funding and CIP funding. And let me assure you that this administration is working to secure needed funding for the CNMI's public education."

Earlier this week, the governor said he signed the CNMI grant application for stabilization stimulus funding for education.

"I look forward to securing those funds for PSS and NMC, so that we can enhance our educational environment and complete more projects and provide more services for our students," Fitial said.

## 'Include China in visa waiver, open DHS office on Tinian'

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**  
haidee\_eugenio@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Tinian Chamber of Commerce is asking the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to include China in the Guam-CNMI visa waiver program and to open an office on Tinian for the processing of federal immigration applications.

In a resolution, the Tinian Chamber of Commerce led by president Phillip Mendiola-Long said Public Law 110-229 or the federalization law establishes two ports of entry on Tinian but does not establish a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services on the island to serve its residents and businesses.

The business group said it would cost many small busi-

nesses and residents at least \$310 per person to travel to Saipan to process USCIS applications.

In 2008 alone, the Department of Labor processed over 1,200 nonresident worker applications on Tinian.

"DHS should open an office on Tinian to provide the same service extended to the businesses on Saipan without subjecting them to additional costs and inconvenience," said the Tinian Chamber.

The business group said the 180-day delay in the start of federalization implementation to Nov. 28 instead of June 1 allows DHS "sufficient time to address the security issues that would exclude China from the visa waiver program."

Tinian, which is the only island with an operating casino and at least two more up for construction, is dependent on Chinese tourists, who will not be exempted from the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program by Nov. 28.

"The Tinian Chamber of Commerce members believe that it is in the best interest of the residents of Tinian that DHS include China in the visa waiver program, as it is essential for the survival of Tinian's casino industry," said the Chamber.

Approximately 90 percent of commerce on Tinian is derived from the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino, and approximately 70 percent of the casino's revenue is from the China market.

Tinian Dynasty has over 600

employees and the casino revenue tax from it creates approximately 70 public sector and 100 private sector jobs, the Tinian Chamber said.

The group said the exclusion of China in the visa waiver program will have "irreparable harm on the Dynasty, local economy, and municipal government."

Besides Mendiola-Long, the other Tinian Chamber of Commerce officers and board members who signed Resolution 2009-02 on April 3 were vice president Don A. Power, secretary Allen M. Perez, and directors Reid Ellis, Jeff Barr, and Jose P. Cruz.

The 37-member Tinian Chamber of Commerce was just revived in February.

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# Gubernatorial tandem holds cleanup

The Committee to Elect Juan Nekai Babauta for Governor and Galvin Sablan Deleon Guerrero for Lieutenant Governor held a roadside cleanup along Beach Road on the morning of Saturday, April 18.

The candidates themselves got their hands dirty and led the cleanup, which was held as an extension of the islandwide cleanup held the day before. The committee decided to hold the cleanup on a Saturday as many of the committee's members could not get off work the day before.

According to the chairman of the committee, Ed Guerrero, the cleanup was a success.

"We had about a hundred supporters, young and old, show up on a Saturday morning. We appreciate their help and commitment to cleaning up our island," he said. "We want to do our part



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
The Team Juan-Galvin poses for a picture before the start of the cleanup held Saturday last week.

for community service."

The committee to elect plans to hold similar community service projects in the future.

The cleanup ended with an impromptu waving just south of the San Jose Microl intersection. (PR)

# Food stamps mulled for poor permanent residents

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA  
Moneth\_deposa@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The CNMI government, through the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, has filed an application for a \$3 million grant that would allow the inclusion of poor permanent residents in the federal Nutrition Assistance Program.

This was disclosed by DCCA Secretary Cecilia T. Celes Friday, who said the funds would come from the stimulus law, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Permanent residents are foreign nationals who were granted permanent residency immigration status on island.

In Fiscal Year 2009, the CNMI food stamp program was allocated \$10.8 million, the bulk of which goes to low-income

U.S. citizens.

Celes said there are approximately over 200 permanent residents who may be eligible for food stamps but are barred because of the citizenship requirement.

"Our staff have noted a significant number of low-income permanent residents that may qualify for the food stamp program," she said, adding that the number may go up as a result of the current economic crunch.

Celes said part of the \$3 million stimulus grant, if approved, is also being eyed for use in building local capacity by giving "employment" to NAP recipients.

The idea, she said, is to employ these people with government agencies but their wages will be paid by a portion of \$3 million grant.

"Our target is to give short-

term jobs and training to the clients, maybe a year, until they actually get a job from either the government or private sector," she said.

Celes described the proposal as a "win-win" situation for both NAP and its clients because the long list of recipients will be eliminated once they find job opportunities.

Saipan Tribune learned that the number of food stamp recipients dropped in the last three years due to the increase in the minimum wage, attrition because of noncompliance with rules, and many recipients moving off-island.

In October 2008, the agency provided assistance to 7,606 clients, a small drop compared to the 7,694 in the same period in 2007.

DCCA had 8,192 recipients in October 2006.

It was noted that the increase in minimum wage from \$3.05 to \$3.55 and now \$4.05 also resulted in the ineligibility of some for the assistance.

DCCA presently extends \$133 monthly assistance to a household size of one, if the income is zero. The maximum monthly income allowable, meanwhile, for a household size of one is \$541.

In terms of dollar value, DCCA issued \$620,259 worth of food stamps in October 2008; \$618,866 in October 2007; and \$674,375 in the same period in 2006.

For November 2008, DCCA recorded 7,593 recipients, valued at \$622,408, compared to only \$603,353 for 7,516 clients in November 2007.

The Division of Nutrition Assistance Program in the CNMI, also known as the Food Stamp Program, was established to promote the general welfare and to safeguard the health and well being of Commonwealth residents by raising the levels of nutrition among low-income, zero-income and needy families and individuals



## Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION



### Notice to the Banks/Lending Institutions

#### Solicitation for Listing and Purchase of Bank-Owned Abandoned and/or Foreclosed Homes/Residential Properties with Marketable Title (Title Marketability to be solely determined by NMHC).

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) through its Board of Directors, is seeking to purchase five properties with \$364,162 of bank-owned Abandoned and/or Foreclosed Homes/Residential Properties with Marketable Title (title marketability to be solely determined by NMHC) located in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands—the islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota. Preference will be given to the banks/lending institutions, who upon NMHC's acquisition and rehabilitation of properties, willing to finance credit-worthy borrowers purchasing the property from NMHC.

According to HUD's definition, a home is "abandoned" when mortgage or tax foreclosure proceedings have been initiated for that property, no mortgage or tax payments have been made by the property owner for at least 90 days AND the property has been vacant for at least 90 days. Moreover, a property has been "foreclosed upon" at the point that, under state or local law, the mortgage or tax foreclosure is complete. HUD will generally not consider a foreclosure to be complete until after the title for the property has been transferred from the former homeowner under some type foreclosure proceeding or transfer in lieu of foreclosure, in accordance with state or local law.

NMHC will be using funds allocated through the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). The NSP will provide emergency assistance to state and local governments to acquire and redevelop foreclosed properties that might otherwise become sources of abandonment and blight within their communities. The NSP provides grants to every state and certain local communities to purchase foreclosed or abandoned homes and to rehabilitate, resell, or redevelop these homes in order to stabilize neighborhoods and stem the decline of home values of neighboring homes. The program is authorized under Title III of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008. (<http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/neighborhoodspg/>)

- NMHC is seeking for a listing and purchase(s) from the bank as to how many abandoned and/or foreclosed homes/residential properties they are able to sell for \$364,162.
- NMHC will acquire the bank-owned abandoned and/or foreclosed homes/residential properties at 70% of its appraised value.
- As part of the transaction, it is NMHC's desire to coordinate with the banks, upon NMHC's completed rehabilitation of the properties, to resell to low/moderate/middle income families as defined by HUD's 2009 Adjusted Home Income Limits.
- Pursuant to NSP requirements, NMHC will ensure that 25%, or \$91,040.00, of the total Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds (\$364,162.00) be made available to qualified borrowers with an income less than 50% of area median income in order to finance individuals whose income is between 50%-120% of area median income.

For the properties the banks propose to sell to NMHC, the bank shall include the following information:

- Appraisal value of bank-owned foreclosed and/or abandoned homes/residential properties. (Appraisal report must be within 6 months of acquisition by NMHC)
- Location (by village) of bank-owned foreclosed and/or abandoned homes/residential properties
- Detailed description of bank-owned foreclosed and/or abandoned homes/residential properties, including photographs of the homes/residential properties
- Date the foreclosed/abandoned home/residential property was built
- Date of the foreclosure
- Principal amount owed for the foreclosed/abandoned home or residential property
- Compounded interest owed until the date the bank discontinued charging interest
- The listing provided by the bank must adhere to the following format:
  - Font style: Times New Roman, 12 point font, black color ink
  - Heading: Saipan, Tinian, and Rota (islands)
  - Subheadings: Villages, in alphabetical order

Interested banks/lending institutions must bring the complete listing to the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ p.m. The NMHC will be conducting a meeting with the banks at the aforementioned time and date to address any questions and concerns. Details of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program will also be provided at the meeting. Preference will be given to the banks/lending institutions, who upon NMHC's acquisition and rehabilitation of properties, willing to finance credit-worthy borrowers purchasing the property from NMHC.

JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO  
Corporate Director

## DISCONNECTION NOTICE

IT&E would like to remind its customers that payments not received by close of business on April 21st, will result in temporary suspension of all telephone services after 6:00 p.m. on that day. To prevent temporary suspension, customers must pay their bills on or before April 21st.

**THIS WILL BE THE ONLY NOTIFICATION IT&E CUSTOMERS WILL RECEIVE\*.**

\* You have the right to dispute this notice. You must state your claim in person or in writing no later than April 21st. You must pay any amount not in dispute to avoid disconnection. Payment denotes acceptance of all charges.

If you have questions regarding billing or service please call Customer Service at 682-4ITE (4483) or visit our Customer Service Representatives at our Chalan Lau-Lau Office.



# Woman with breast cancer sues Hawaii doctor

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

A Saipan resident is suing a former Hawaii-based doctor for alleged medical malpractice, claiming the physician failed to exercise due care and follow-up on her breasts' reconstructive surgery.

Mary Anne E. Stewart sued in federal court Dr. Barbara Honnebier and her Pacific Institute of Human Restoration LLC, five unnamed health care organizations, and five unnamed persons.

Stewart asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to order the defendants to pay her damages and court costs. She filed the lawsuit without a lawyer.

According to Stewart's complaint, while in Thailand in June 2006, she had a mammogram that was positive for suspicious microcalcifications. Consultation with other physicians led Stewart to The Queen's Medical Center in Hawaii for treatment.

On Jan. 10, 2007, Stewart traveled to Hawaii, where, on Feb. 5, 2007, she had total bilateral mastectomy. Prior to her surgery, Stewart consulted with Dr. Honnebier as to post-mastectomy breast reconstruction surgery.

In order to make the reconstruction of Stewart's breasts easier and to give that reconstruction a better chance of success, Dr. Honnebier was consulted to implant medical devices called "expanders" in her chest immediately following her mastectomy.

Honnebier implanted these expanders while Stewart was still under general anesthesia from her mastectomy.

The morning after Stewart returned to her residence following her surgery, her son noticed that when he was changing the bandages there was a visible hole in the suturing on the surgical wound on her left breast.

The son called Dr. Honnebier and another doctor immediately and both doctors had Stewart come to their offices that day.

A Dr. Nakashizuka, a mastectomy surgeon, cultured the wound. Dr. Honnebier gave Stewart silver antibiotic cream and silver gauze to apply to the hole thrice a day after washing.

Over the course of the next several months, Stewart repeatedly complained of pain and discoloration on her left breast. Dr. Honnebier continued to assure Stewart that she just didn't know what was going on with the site.

On April 17, 2007, a physical therapist suggested that her surgical site might be infected. The following day, Stewart complained of pain, swelling, and discoloration in her left breast.

Dr. Honnebier prescribed an antibiotic. Within 24 hours the breast infection was significantly obvious. Dr. Honnebier incised and drained some fluid

from Stewart's left breast and sent sample for analysis.

On April 19, 2007, Dr. Honnebier operated on Stewart and removed the expander from her left breast. The operation showed that the infection in her left breast had also eroded the expander and caused tissue and muscle damage within her left breast.

Two weeks after this surgery, Stewart was forced to return home to Saipan because of the continuing loss of income she was sustaining.

Before departing for Saipan, Stewart worked out a payment plan with Dr. Honnebier to apply to the outstanding balance on her medical bill.

On Nov. 8, 2007, Dr. Honnebier allegedly contacted Stewart to inform her that unless she pays the remaining balance of those costs not covered by her medical insurance, plus the projected amount for the remaining surgery that would not be covered by her medical insurance up front, she would not treat her any further.

Dr. Honnebier did not recommend any other physician to perform Stewart's reconstructive

surgery should she not be able to pay this balance and prepayment before December 2007.

A reconstructive surgeon

with a practice in Guam was able to take Stewart as a referral patient.

As of the date of the filing of

the lawsuit, Stewart is still being treated to finalize the reconstructive surgery.

Stewart asserted that Dr. Honnebier failed to exercise care in both her reconstructive surgery and follow-up care.

She alleged that the doctor's repeated avoidance of her over a course of months following her surgery when an infection was developing "amounts to patient abandonment and gross negligence."



## REUNION

Former garment employees of Sako Corp. and their families gather for a reunion at the Bicol Pavilion in Susupe yesterday, four years after their employer abandoned them without paying their last few wages. Due to the elimination of quotas on textile exports to the United States since 2005, Saipan completely lost its once mighty garment industry in March this year.

HAIDE V. EUGENIO

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## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS For Food and Other Concessions

The 2009 OCEANIA BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (hereafter "Committee") is responsible for the operation, management and administration of the 2009 Oceania Basketball Tournament. To assure that the Tournament participants and spectators are accorded adequate food and beverage, merchandise, and other services at the Tournament, the Committee hereby requests proposals from currently licensed companies experienced and capable of providing such services and wish to be considered for the following Contracts:



The RFP Package will be available until April 24, 2009 during business hours at the Law Office of Michael A. White, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan.

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 29, 2009 at the Conference Room at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Proposals are due no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 4, 2009 at the Law Office of Michael A. White, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan.

Concession Contracts to operate any or all of the following concession services: (1) food and beverage; (2) merchandise; and (3) other services as the Committee may later determine. The Contract term will be from June 19 to June 29, 2009.

The Committee will evaluate proposals and award a separate Contract for each concession service. Committee encourages proposers to submit proposals for one or more of the concession services.

Proposers are required to pay a \$50.00 non-refundable fee for each copy of the RFP.

The Committee assumes no obligation of any kind for expenses incurred by a respondent to this Notice or the RFP package.

All inquiries must be in writing, and sent to Michael A. White at fax no. 234 9537 or emailed to mwhite@saipan.com.

## Tinian workshop on how to do business with the federal govt

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO  
haidee\_eugenio@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Tinian Chamber of Commerce will host a training workshop tomorrow, April 21, focused on how to do business with the federal government in connection with the military buildup on Guam and how to obtain capital through the U.S. Small Business Administration's lending program.

The federal contracting workshop consists of two training sessions of three hours each, covering subjects such as learning about one's potential federal customer, and obtaining a taxpayer identification number and a past performance review.

The first session will be from 9am to 12pm, while the duplicate session will be from 2pm to 5pm. Both will be held at the Tinian Public Library.

Phillip Mendiola-Long, president of the Tinian Chamber of Commerce, said representatives from the U.S. Small Business Administration and the U.S. General Services Administration will conduct the training sessions for business members who are interested on "how" to do business with the federal government.

"All small business owners who are interested in participating in the \$20 billion Guam/Marianas military buildup are encouraged to attend this workshop with officials from SBA and GSA," the Tinian Chamber said.

The training resource persons are: Brandy M. Untalan, customer service director at the U.S. General Services Administration's Federal Acquisition Service; Kenneth Lujan, Guam branch manager of U.S. SBA; and Jack Corbett, business development specialist at the U.S. SBA.

Other subjects that will be covered include using FED-BizOps to look for open solicitations to bid on; obtain a DUNS number; Complete Central Contractor Registration; obtain a small business certification; obtain a North American Industry Classification Code; complete the On-line Representations and Certifications; learn about SBA loan availability and new programs; and learn about SBA business incubators.

Tinian Chamber members will be charged a \$5 fee, and non-Chamber members will be charged \$10. Drinks and refreshments will be available free of charge for paid participants.

## Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

April 20, 2003

### CDC: NMI, Guam SARS-free

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has confirmed that the CNMI and Guam remain free from the mysterious disease called Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. In an e-mail response to the Saipan Tribune, CDC media relations officer Jennifer Morcone said that the two Pacific islands have had no reported case of SARS. "At this time, no cases have been reported in the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands and Guam," said Morcone. The CDC has listed five suspected cases in nearby Hawaii. The CDC list only covers the different states, not insular areas.

### House panel to tackle bill on sin tax rollback

The House Committee on Health and Welfare has summoned close to 30 CNMI agencies and individuals to testify on the legislative proposal that seeks to reduce by 50 percent the sin tax increases implemented under Public Law 13-38. In an April 15 notice, Rep. Gloria DLC. Cabrera-then the acting committee chairperson-requested the various entities to be present on the May 7 public hearing to be conducted at the House Chamber starting 9am. Witnesses requested to be present at the hearing included Cabinet members of the Babauta administration, including Public Health Secretary Dr. James U. Hofschneider, Attorney General Ramona V. Manglona, Finance Secretary Frankie Villanueva, Commerce Secretary Fermin M. Atalig, Community and Cultural Affairs Secretary Juan L. Babauta.

April 20, 2004

### NMI-China MOU hangs fire

The scheduled signing of a memorandum of understanding between the CNMI and China's National Tourism Administration was held off Friday in Beijing amid a brewing rift between the U.S. and China over the U.S. government's policy requiring foreigners to be photographed and fingerprinted upon entry to the U.S. Gov. Juan N. Babauta, who just arrived from a two-day trip to Beijing, said yesterday the MOU signing is likely to take place in one to two months. "I had an excellent meeting with the chairman [of China's National Tourism Administration]. He is very sympathetic with the CNMI. It's quite obvious that he wants to help the CNMI get the approved destination status, but because of the dispute between the U.S. government and China over the fingerprinting, there seems to be a cooling of the relationship between the two countries," he said.

### Mobil raises gas prices anew

Mobil Oil Marianas has raised its gas prices by 5 cents a gallon-the fifth increase this year-bringing the total gallon price adjustment to 22 cents in less than four months. Gallon prices now come close to \$3 a gallon, with Mobil's full-service rate for super gasoline pegged at \$2.629 per gallon. The oil company first increased pump prices by four cents a gallon in January, before increasing them again by 3 cents a gallon, matching Shell gas stations' pump price adjustment of 7 cents per gallon. Mobil later declared three 5-cent-increases beginning March 11. The most recent 5-cent-hike became effective after midnight yesterday.

April 20, 2005

### Double whammy for fire victims

Some 21 persons displaced by the fire that gutted their Chalan Piao barracks last Thursday got a double dose of trouble after being thrown out of a temporary shelter and failing to secure assistance from Karidat yesterday. "Nobody is willing to help us," one of the victims said, through a translator. Yesterday, they said most of them were uncertain if anyone would offer them temporary shelter. The victims, who are mostly Chinese, said they moved out from the American Red Cross' temporary shelter yesterday after being allegedly told to do so. Red Cross allegedly referred the group to Karidat, another nongovernment civic group. When they trooped to Karidat's office yesterday, Karidat officials allegedly told them, "Pick up the police report so you can be assisted," according to one of the fire victims.

### Court: Sako owes 65 workers over \$1M

The U.S. District Court yesterday declared Sako Corp. liable in the amount of over \$1 million, in connection with a lawsuit brought to court by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission on behalf of some 65 workers. Chief judge Alex R. Munson entered a default judgment against Sako Corp., which ceased business operations on Saipan earlier this year.



## NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION



### NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Use of Homeless Prevention Funds  
(This advertisement is paid by NMHC with HUD Funds.)

The Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) is announcing the amendment of the Commonwealth's Consolidated Plan for Program Years 2005-2009. The amendment provides the inclusion of the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) which will be made available to the Commonwealth by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The total HPRP allocation is \$589,165.00. Intended use of the NSP grant is described as follows:

Priority	Activity Type: Homeless Prevention	Use of Funds
Financial Assistance	Financial assistance includes the following activities: short-term rental assistance, medium-term rental assistance, security deposits, utility deposits, utility payments, moving costs assistance, and motel or hotel vouchers.	\$459,707.00
Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services	Housing and stabilization services include the following activities as detailed in the HPRP Notice: case management, outreach, housing search and placement, legal services, mediation and credit repair.	\$50,000.00
Data Collection and Evaluation	Data collection and evaluation include costs associated with operating HUD-approved homeless management information systems for purposes of collecting unduplicated counts of homeless persons and analyzing patterns of use of HPRP funds.	\$50,000.00
Administrative Costs	Program and Administrative Costs	Up to 5% of total HPRP funds: \$29,458.00

The Amended plan is available for public review and inspection at NMHC's Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Tinian and Rota during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays. NMHC is inviting the public to comment on the proposed use of funds. Written comments should be submitted **no later than 4:30 p.m., May 4, 2009 at NMHC's Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Tinian and Rota during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.**

NMHC does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to or treatment or employment its programs or activities. NMHC has been designated to coordinate compliance with the nondiscrimination requirements of Section 504, the ADA, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 504 regulations implemented by the EEOC and the Department of Justice. If you should require any additional information, please contact Ms. Jeannie P. Mafnas, NMHC's Planner/Grant Writer at 234-6866/7689.

JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO  
Corporate Director



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Second Floor Afetña Square Building, San Antonio, P.O. Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950



NOTICE OF CLOSURE OR DISMISSAL  
2008 LABOR CASES

April 13, 2009, first notice  
April 20, 2009, second notice

COMPLAINANTS IN THE FOLLOWING LABOR CASES:

Each of the labor cases listed below has been adjudicated or dismissed by the Administrative Hearing Office. In each case, this is a final action by the Administrative Hearing Office. All claims, including all claims for money damages, and all claims for eligibility for transfer, have been adjudicated or dismissed. Any complainant who has not been served personally or by mail with the hearing officer's order adjudicating or dismissing the case is now, as of the second date of publication of this notice, served with the order. A complainant served by means of this publication may obtain a copy of the hearing officer's order from the Administrative Hearing Office. A complainant whose case has been adjudicated or dismissed by the Administrative Hearing Office has until May 5, 2009 to appeal the order. This publication does not affect any prior service personally or otherwise on a complainant, and the time in which to appeal runs from the date of that service.

COMPLAINANTS WHOSE ADMINISTRATIVE AWARDS HAVE NOT BEEN PAID:

Any complainant who was awarded money damages in a case listed below and has not been paid should come to the Complaint Intake Section, Department of Labor, and fill out a declaration affirming that payment has not been made. Please bring a copy of the administrative order in your case and your entry permit card. A complainant who has not been paid has until April 27, 2009 to report to the Complaint Intake Section.

Case No.	Complainant	Respondent(s)
08-175	ABELLA, JUANITA	ZIETZKE, COURTNEY L. DBA CRYSTAL SEAS, CNMI, INC.
08-031	AFRICA, NENITA G.	WORLD APPAREL, INC.
08-089	AHAMED KABEER, MD. SALLY	MISAMIS CONST. SPN. LTD.
08-223	AHN, SOO JI	POP STREET, INC. DBA POPS Y
08-203	AKTAR, AKTARUJJAMAN	CALVOS DEVELOPMENT INC. DBA CALVO'S LANDSCAPE GARDENER
08-046	ALCALA, ROGELIO	FELIPE Q. ATALIG
08-093	ALCANTARA, ANNA LIZA	SIBAL, LUZVISMEN L.
08-251	ALETA, ESTHER	DELOS SANTOS, ELENA DBA SAVANNAH'S BEAUTY PARLOR
08-032	ANADACE, JOBY A.	NOEL M. BAITLON DBA TAGA ROOM RENTAL
08-042	ANGELES, ANGELITO MARTINEZ	BRUCE A. BATEMAN DBA PORKY'S BEACH BAR
08-096	ARAFOL, ALVIN	RGC CORPORATION DBA DANIELLE'S MASSAGE AND BEAUTY SALON
08-056	ARONCE, VICENTE T.	FAMILY KITCHEN MAI CORP. DBA FAMILY KITCHEN MAI RESTAURANT
08-055	ASUNCION, MARIVIC	FAMILY KITCHEN MAI CORP. DBA FAMILY KITCHEN MAI RESTAURANT
08-205	AWA-AW, JAWIN	JOANN T. AQUINO DBA LITTLE DARLINGS EARLY CHILDHOOD & RESPITE CARE
08-021	BALANA, GEMMA	SEMAN, MALOU O. DBA ISLAND FLAVOR
08-128	BALANA, GEMMA	ALFANTE, YOLANDA O. DBA KULTI'S ENT.
08-077	BALANDITA, CALIXTO	ARRIOLA, GREGORIO C.
08-103	BARREDO, CHERRY	RGC CORPORATION DBA DANIELLE'S MASSAGE AND BEAUTY SALON
08-209	BARRERA, ROLAND	E.A.P. CORPORATION
08-045	BARRIGA, MANUEL	FELIPE Q. ATALIG
08-207	BATINO, ERWIN	MUGEN CORP. DBA WAFT BY THE SEA RESTAURANT
08-113	BATOON, JESTER	YOU RIM CORPORATION DBA JOKER'S WILD
08-011	BELEN, JUAN	TUDELA, EFRAIN
08-154	BENITO, CEFERINA	CATHERINE PANGELINAN DBA BOLIS R-US CATERING
08-010	BERMUDO, ROBERTO	KIM, JAUNG SIG DBA MASTER AUTO SHOP
08-079	BHUIYAN, MD GOLGAR	TUDELA, ANTONIA M.
08-104	BONAFE III, JOVENAL	AGBANLOG III, IGNACIO C. DBA CARNOT AIRCONDITIONING & REFRIGERATION
08-121	BONDOC, DIOSDADO	RDA ENTERPRISES INC. DBA MARY'S BAKERY
08-182	BRIONES, ROWENA	PHILIPPINE BENEVOLENT MISSIONARIES ASSOCIATION, INC. & BIENVENIDA CAMACHO - DE FACTO ER
08-233	BUCAD, HENRY	BEA, MARIA JOYCE (DE FACTO ER) DBA KARNOT
08-155	BUHAY, ELDEN	CATHERINE PANGELINAN DBA BOLIS R-US CATERING
08-173	CALAGE, OSCAR	ZIETZKE, COURTNEY L. DBA CRYSTAL SEAS, CNMI, INC.
08-053	CANLAS, OFELIA T.	HARUO MENGRANG
08-099	CASAPAO, JULIANA J.	LAI'S AMERICAN CORP. DBA MOONLIGHT SHOPPING
08-074	CASTILLO, LEONIDA	CHALAN KIYA CIRCLE APARTMENT & FEJERAN, MATILDE LG
08-009	CHEN, DEFENG	AMERICAN KAI HUA DBA HAO ZA LA RESTAURANT
08-146	CHOW, KWOK SHUN	MING DYNASTY INV. CORP. DBA MING PALACE CHINESE RESTAURANT
08-073	CODIA, ELVIE	ADA, AIDA G.
08-135	CRUZ, JOHN	SABLAN, RAMON M.
08-084	CRUZ, SUSAN	LUHK, RUHTIK R.
08-081	CUEVAS, ACIE	HOTEL RIVIERA SPN INC.
08-181	CUI, WENBI	SAN JOSE MOTELS & MS. WEN - DE FACTO ER
08-226	CUPATAN, JOMELYN	KINTOL, JEROME P.
08-043	DACUMA, DANILO	BIG BOY MARINE SPORTS INC.
08-137	DALILIS, MERLINA	QUITUGUA, JEFFREY/PETERS, LIAUNA
08-018	DALUZ, NORA	MANGLONA, LORRAINE M. DBA BACK 9 SPORTS BAR
08-221	DANG, THO	R & C COMPANY, INC. DBA HELPING HANDS
08-114	DAVID, REYNALDO	SUZUKI & ASSOCIATES INC. DBA HIMAWARI
08-227	DE BELEN, JANICE	LEN'S 5 TAVERN/GARY WEAKLY
08-054	DE GUZMAN, JENNIFER	FAMILY KITCHEN MAI CORP. DBA FAMILY KITCHEN MAI RESTAURANT
08-108	DE JOSE, ELIGARDO	PHILLIPS CORPORATION
08-036	DELA CRUZ, EVELINDA J.	LEORA M. NGIRABLOSCH
08-094	DIESTRO, HILARIO	WORLD CORPORATION
08-078	DOCTOLERO, ADELA	WORLD APPAREL, INC.
08-243	DOLDE, NOEL	UNICORN CORPORATION
08-105	DONDONILLA, ROSITA	ELVIRA L. BARCINAS
08-133	DURIAN, CECILIA	TUDELA, ANTONIA M.
08-102	EBDANE, RODOLFO	MARS CORPORATION
08-047	ENCARNACION, ALBERTO	FELIPE Q. ATALIG
08-144	FABITO, SAMMY	DA KINE INC. (DE FACTO ER) DBA HAWAII BAR AND GRILL
08-065	FANG, MEILONG	UNO MODA CORP.
08-151	FLORES, REBECCA	SHEU, TZU MING
08-112	FONTANILLA, MAXIMINO	J.C. TENORIO ENTERPRISES INC. DBA HAFADA BAKERY
08-095	FUSHUN, MENG	ADPIA COMMUNICATION INC.
08-161	GAMBON, RODRIGO	JG SABLAN ROCK QUARRY CO. INC.
08-168	GAO, SHUZHEN	LICKISAP HUI MAO YU
08-022	GIRON, GINA	SEMAN, MALOU O. DBA ISLAND FLAVOR
08-127	GIRON, GINA	ALFANTE, YOLANDA O. DBA KULTI'S ENT.
08-211	LI, GUIXIANG	SAIPAN SJ CORP.
08-177	GUO, ZHANGMING	APPLE CORP. & DOW INSURANCE
08-244	GUTIER, ALEJO	ROBERT, SERAFIN CASTRO
08-005	HANG, LIYA	DRAGON CORP.
08-066	HUANG, QIANHUA	DARL CORPORATION
08-231	HUANG, YONGMEI	ALDAN, STEPHANIE
08-057	HUEVOS, MANOLITO	FAMILY KITCHEN MAI CORP. DBA FAMILY KITCHEN MAI RESTAURANT
08-118	IBALLAR, RODOLFO	NIETO, ELSA DUEÑAS
08-140	ISLAM, MD	WINNERS CORPORATION
08-041	JACOLBE, DANILO COIME	NESTOR R. ABLOG DBA GENERAL FASHION CENTER
08-003	JIN, CHENGQUAN	DRAGON CORP.
08-250	JIN, HONGGUANG	DAVID SPN CORPORATION
08-195	JIN, HONGMEI	KARIS CORP. AND MR. HAN
08-037	JIN, JIZI	SE KYO CORP. DBA FINE TREE RESTAURANT
08-063	KOO, YONG HOI	KOO'S CORP. DBA GALMAEGI TOUR
08-248	LAGUNERO, RICHARD	CONSTRUCTION & MATERIAL SUPPLY
08-129	LAURIO, PATRIO	THAT SAIPAN GIRL, LLC DBA OCEANS BAR & CAFÉ
08-040	LAZAGA, ALLAN CARAPATAN	MAC-US INTL. INC. DBA NEW CITY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION (NCIC)
08-163	LI, DENGHONG	LCKG COMPANY LTD.
08-165	LI, LIANG	L & S APPAREL CORP.
08-180	LI, LIANYU	SAN JOSE MOTELS & MS. WEN - DE FACTO ER
08-033	LI, QIRONG	FENG HUA ENT. DBA FENG HUA (HARVEST) MART

Case No.	Complainant	Respondent(s)
08-061	LI, SHU YUN	HANS PACIFIC CORP.
08-249	LI, ZHUTIAN	SHINE STAR CORPORATION
08-019	LIN, RENHUA	SAM KWANG SAIPAN CORP.
08-086	LIU, JIYOU	WINNERS CORPORATION
08-087	LIU, WEIXIA	YONG JIA CORP. (DE FACTO ER)
08-228	LIU, YANQIN	MZ CORPORATION DBA CRYSTAL MASSAGE
08-012	LOPEZ, ROLANDO	NORTHERN, RICK DBA HAMILTON BAR AND RESTAURANT
08-147	LU, RONG	MING DYNASTY INV. CORP. DBA MING PALACE CHINESE RESTAURANT
08-145	LUMABI, ALFREDO	DA KINE INC. (DE FACTO ER) DBA HAWAII BAR AND GRILL
08-017	LUMAUAG, LIZA	BAITLON, NOEL M. DBA TAGA ROOM RENTAL
08-070	LUMBAD, ADOLFO	PACIFIC MARINE AND INDUSTRIAL CORPORATION
08-210	MA, QIU FANG	BILLY BONES BAR (ER IN LIIDS IS WILLIAM ALBERT MOTT)
08-153	MAGLANQUE	ASIA PACIFIC HOTEL INC. DBA FIESTA RESORT & SPA
08-245	MAGTAPAT, RUPERTO	JG SABLAN ICE & WATER CO. INC.
08-138	MAHILUM, MARICEL	KOO'S CORPORATION
08-246	MALLARI, ORLANDO	SIGUA, ELEAZAR Y.
08-109	MALLARI, PONCIANO	EYUN JI CORPORATION
08-160	MANALAC, CHONA	MAFNAS, ANTONIO C.
08-044	MANONGSONG, MARIO	FELIPE Q. ATALIG
08-200	MARCELO, RODOLFO	BOBBIES AMUSEMENT CO. INC. DBA BOBBIES CAFÉ
08-235	MARCILLANA, SIMEON	MARQUEZ, NENITA V. DBA GENERAL AUTO REPAIR SHOP
08-001	MARUCOT, ANGELINA	CASTRO, ANA D.
08-062	MEDINA, MARK RYAN D.	SONIC INTERNATIONAL
08-098	MIRASOL, JOEY	LAGARTOS, ROLANDO
08-116	MOON, JANG SUB	WORLD CORPORATION DBA SAIPAN WORLD RESORT
08-157	MORERA, OFELIA	USG INVESTMENTS INC.
08-208	NAVARRETE, GRACE	MUGEN CORP. DBA WAFT BY THE SEA RESTAURANT (TWA ER)
08-101	NAVARRO, JONATHAN	TAITANO, HAL BASILIO O. DBA RNH ENTERPRISES
08-222	NGUYEN, THI THUY	R & C COMPANY, INC. DBA HELPING HANDS
08-111	ORDINADO, RICALITO	J.C. TENORIO ENTERPRISES INC. DBA HAFADA BAKERY
08-004	ORENSE, ARVIN	IBARRA, DIVINA S.
08-088	OSORIO, JOSE	GRAPHICS INC.; AGANA, NORMA M. (ER), ET. AL
08-068	PADILLA, CHARITO	FEJERAN, MATILDE LG
08-075	PADILLA, ELMER	FEJERAN, MATILDE LG
08-020	PANIBE, ANDREA	SEMAN, MALOU O. DBA ISLAND FLAVOR
08-126	PANIBE, ANDREA	ALFANTE, YOLANDA O. DBA KULTI'S ENT.
08-100	PASTORITO, HARYET	MCKENZIE, CAROL A. DBA TOMMY'S SALON
08-197	PATRICIO, JOEY	INTER PACIFIC RESORT CORP. DBA PACIFIC ISLAND CLUB SAIPAN
08-142	PATULANDONG, ENRIQUE	JOO YEON CORPORATION DBA MIRAE TOUR
08-071	PIAO, AJJIN	GUAM WIRELESS TELEPHONE CO.
08-150	PIAO, SHUNJI	K.S. CHANG CORPORATION DBA I-MART & IL JIN CAFÉ
08-196	PISANO, LEOPOLDO JR.	INTER PACIFIC RESORT CORP. DBA PACIFIC ISLAND CLUB SAIPAN
08-201	QIN, FENGJUN	PACIFIC HORIZON, LTD. (ER OF RECORD); ZHAO, YAN FANG; ZHOU, MEI LI DBA APPLE BAR
08-167	QU, YUEPING	HANS CORPORATION
08-253	QUAN, YUSHAN	KIM'S GENERAL CORPORATION
08-194	QUAN, ZAISHAN	KARIS CORP. AND MR. HAN
08-247	QUAIOIT, RONALD	TANO GROUP INC.
08-183	RAHMAN, MAZBER	PHILPAN INTERNATIONAL CORP. DBA MC-ASIA INTERNATIONAL
08-179	RAUT, SHYAM	CONCEPCION, IGNACIO
08-097	REJANO, RAMON	LAGARTOS, ROLANDO
08-134	RICAFRENTE, VILMA	ASG DEVELOPMENT COMPANY
08-136	RODRIGUEZ, MICHELLE	SANTOS, JOCELYN D.C. DBA EXPRESS BUSINESS SERVICE
08-106	RUAN, CHAOYING	SAM KWANG SAIPAN CORP.
08-232	SABADO, FELICIANO	BEA, MARIA JOYCE (DE FACTO ER) DBA KARNOT
08-028	SAMONTE, LEONIDA P.	YOUNG CHUL LEE DBA MUSUNG CORPORATION
08-048	SARMIENTO, REYNANTE	FELIPE Q. ATALIG
08-052	SAYSON, HEDELITA	BRIAN R. KENDALL
08-123	SECILLANO, VIRGILIO	RDA ENTERPRISES INC. DBA MARY'S BAKERY
08-124	SIKDER, MILON	RAY'S LAWN CARE & MAINTENANCE INC.
08-169	SOLIS, MELINDA	MAYU INTERNATIONAL CO. LTD. DBA CAFÉ DE K RESTAURANT
08-082	SUNUWAR, PADAM	CAMACHO, JOHN BORJA
08-006	SUSAN, ANTONIO	ADA, EDWARD B.
08-174	TENEBRO, LORETO	NORTHERN MARIANAS FISHERIES
08-060	TESORO, PANCID	UNTALAN, MAGDALENA
08-115	TOIZON, MA. GINA	ONE CALL INCORPORATED
08-014	TORREFRANCA, JUAN	BAKA, CHERYL R. DBA CHERYL'S MARKET
08-013	TORREGOSA, PANFILO	GOLDEN HARVEST INTL. SCHOOL INC.
08-119	TUASY, ROBERTO	RDA ENTERPRISES INC. DBA MARY'S BAKERY
08-143	TUMADA, CARMELITA	CEPEDA, CHARLOTTE R.
08-225 (T)	TUMARONG, HONELYN	FOUR SEASON INTL. CORP. DBA QUEEN NIGHT CLUB & KARAOKE
08-076	TURALBA, MARIJO	FEJERAN, MATILDE LG
08-186	VALDEZ, GERTRUDES	KUMANOMI ISLAND CO. LTD. DBA CAFÉ DE COLMAR
08-034	VALENZUELA, ELVIRA O.	VICENTE M. FALIG DBA PNB SNACK BAR
08-122	VELICARIA, MAURO	RDA ENTERPRISES INC. DBA MARY'S BAKERY
08-072	VILLANUEVA, DHANA MARIE	KAP SOON CHOI
08-206	VILLAREAL, FRANCISCO	MUGEN CORP. DBA WAFT BY THE SEA RESTAURANT
08-026	VINO, GLORIA	TUDELA, DOREEN M.
08-220	VU, LOC	R & C COMPANY, INC. DBA HELPING HANDS
08-092	WANG, JUN	FLYING DRAGON INC.
08-125	WANG, YU	CHARM INC. DBA ROSE BEAUTY SALON
08-030	WU, HONGYUN	MARIANAS GARMENT MFG CORP.
08-139	XIAO, XIUZHAO	TM SABLAN COMPANY
08-156	YANSAN, GUILLERMO	CATHERINE PANGELINAN DBA BOLIS R-US CATERING
08-166	YU, XIN HONG	L & S APPAREL CORP.
08-083	ZAMORA, KATHERINE	CONCEPCION, JESSE AND ELIZABETH
08-069	ZHANG, JIANQIN	NICE CORPORATION
08-148	ZHANG, JIN	MING DYNASTY INV. CORP. DBA MING PALACE CHINESE RESTAURANT
08-149	ZHANG, YUN	MING DYNASTY INV. CORP. DBA MING PALACE CHINESE RESTAURANT
08-058	ZHAO, CHUNXIANG	MEMO FASHION CORP.
08-025	ZHAO, YUNJIE	WORLD APPAREL, INC.
08-192	ZHU, WEN MEI	RONG HUA CORPORATION DBA DAKEYI RESTAURANT
08-178	ZOU, LILI	AMY INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION DBA PURE SPA
08-008	ZUO, XIU PNIG	THREE NINE CORPORATION

# Opinion

Hafa Adai!

## Saipan Tribune

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### EDITORIAL

## The EPA readies a hammer

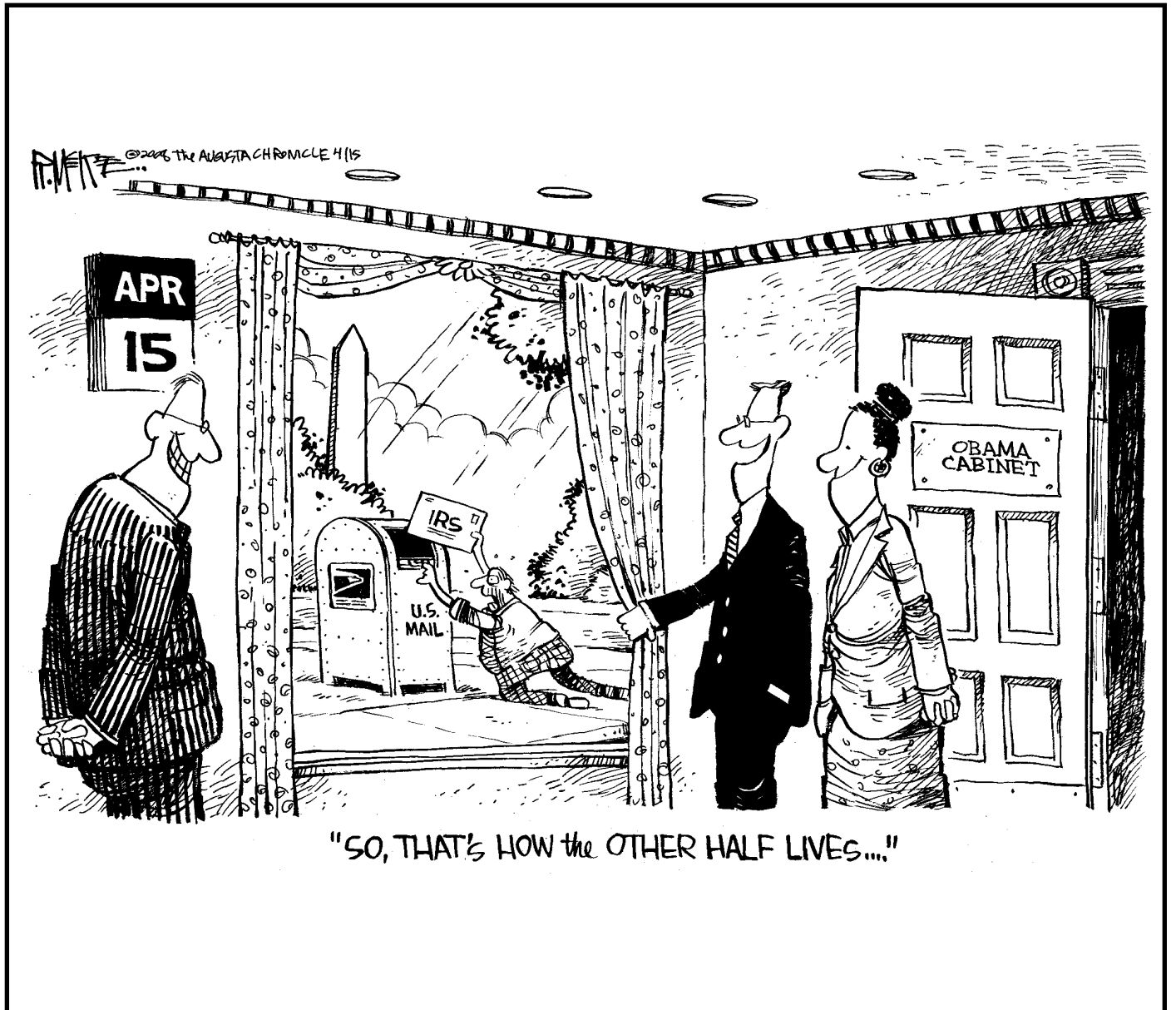
As soon as next week, the Environmental Protection Agency could follow through on an order from the Supreme Court to either declare carbon dioxide a pollutant or to say why it isn't. That decision could usefully signal to the world that the United States is serious about regulating greenhouse gas emissions. But it should also send a shiver down Congress's collective spine. Because the regulation of carbon will have a profound effect on the American economy, this vital task should be the responsibility of Congress, not of unelected officials at the EPA.

The EPA does have the authority under the Clean Air Act to regulate air pollutants that have "effects on (public) welfare," "on ... weather... and climate... as well as effects on ... personal comfort and well-being." Emitted greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide, will have such effects. The Supreme Court's 2007 ruling in *Massachusetts v. EPA* affirmed this when the majority concluded that the EPA had the authority to control emissions from motor vehicle tailpipes and ordered the agency to issue an endangerment finding. Then-EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson was close to doing so on the basis of public welfare, but he opted for another public comment period after intense pressure from the Bush administration.

The probable and impending endangerment finding by current EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson would fulfill the court's mandate and then require Jackson to devise regulations for the transportation sector. But having declared greenhouse gases a pollutant, the agency would have to set about the long process of regulating such gases from all other sources as well. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce expresses concern about the impact of such regulation on the construction industry, because residential and commercial buildings are larger sources of global-warming pollution than are motor vehicles. Rep. John Dingell, D-Mich., then-chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, predicted last year that seeking to control climate change with such piecemeal regulation would lead to a "glorious mess."

The best way to stop this from happening is for Congress to adopt a more rational scheme, by putting a price on carbon with a tax (ideally) or a cap-and-trade market. Next week, Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., the current chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, will hold hearings on the discussion draft of comprehensive energy legislation that he and Rep. Edward Markey, D-Mass., chairman of the energy and environment subcommittee, released before the Easter recess. While the proposal details many ambitious programs for renewable energy and efficiency, it is noticeably mute on the contours of a cap-and-trade system. Specifically, it doesn't say whether the pollution allowances would be auctioned or a portion given away to industry to ease the transition to a carbon-constrained economy. This is an important question, one whose answer will have a profound impact on the way Americans live—one of many basic issues that should be settled by their representatives in Congress.

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## The FBI in the House of Horus

It must have been a slow week before Lent for our Full Body Inspectors and the Female Bodice Inquisitors to have time to close down Kelley's Bar, as well as grab six Garapan ladies-of-the-night within a week, or so the grapevine and the papers say.

The fact that one of the ladies was not quite 21 years old yet means that she violated the law against loitering in an establishment that serves alcoholic beverages, that two are on island on student visas means that they violated immigration provisions that prohibits them from being gainfully employed, make these purveyors of feminine pulchritude a real threat to the nation's security. They must be engaged in a higher level and urgent form of espionage to be so blatantly silly and transparently careless in their behavior.

I am sure our very able personnel of the Federal Bureau of Investigation are all done with ferreting out the fingers of corruption in the affairs and coffers of State, and have assured the general public of the secured state of our domestic tranquility, to be able to trap these insidious practitioners of an illicit trade.

Given the preeminence of the culture of suspicion since we cast doubt on the Dutch Boy Paint ad where the picture of a Scandinavian boy (obviously, a commie) standing over a globe oozing with red paint, patently a symbol of the red menace, it is no surprise if we are assiduously monitoring the movements of aliens and other threats to our social stability. Where best to catch these aliens in the act of violating our laws than in the CNMI where "them" outnumber "us."

The word on the street is that a *mama-san* had the temerity to raise her fees when the boys from one of our Navy boats came calling for R&R. In jacking her fees, she might have been casting her net to the higher echelons in the chain of command. She might have been baiting the knowledgeable to innocently divulge information when they had imbibed too much Jim Beam, or taken comfort in the soft arms of her young *nu ers* (girls). One can never tell what insidious intents lurk on the painted faces on the other side of those karaoke bars! So the low level disgruntled grunts were not too happy, and our blue jacket personnel were only too glad to set a trap. After *mama-san* made her pitch and got paid, the girls went to a hotel room where they were properly cuffed, according to one of our not-always-reliable sources.

In the American landscape of retribution where the heat of vengeance and the color of reprisal is the lingua franca of international law and justice, the closing of Gitmo notwithstanding, we can almost guess what awaits these descendants of the Red Guards who were born in the sunset years of Deng Xiao Peng. One of my former

By JAIME VERGARA

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section.



English language learners found her way to a penitentiary in Christopher Dodd's domain for failing to return her recalcitrant friend's \$5,000 that was paid for the privilege of coming to work in Saipan, and failing to stomach the job description of a karaoke bar waitress! Human trafficking is the offense.

A friend from the legal profession told me this week that she knew I was soft-hearted but that she trusts I am not turning soft-minded as well. Similarly, a colleague, after perusing my week-long musings on the House of Horus a few weeks back also confronted me with the charge that not only do I appear soft on the illegal activity of commercial sex, and evidently condoning it, I seem to be gaily promoting the profession, and painting a false picture that all is well with the "pretty woman" and "Irma la Douce."

Fair enough. I do worry about the despondency that pervades most of the practitioners I have met. There is Jeannie who no longer is welcome to any of the watering holes because she has shown behavior that indicates a few marbles may be out of place. She walks the street near a 24-hour convenience store selling her wares for as low as \$10 per acting performance. Her neglect of hygiene and appearance, however, repels consumers. She has hooked up with a neighbor suspected of certain addictions, and yes, she is a sore sight and should be of particular concern to the Department of Health—physical and mental, the Police Department, and Immigration.

Then there is Linda from a rural province who paid ¥90,000 (about \$12,000 at the time) for the privilege of working on Saipan. Lured by a town mate who promised her a job, she came when garment factories were shutting down, worked on an on-call basis for three months before the factory advised her to seek other employment. Her town mate conveniently disappeared at about the same time, and she did not bother to return to their hometown so that she could be inveigled to return some of the upfront fee paid to come to Saipan.

See THE FBI on Next Page

**EDITORIAL POLICY**

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

**Letters to the Editor****Rebuttal to attack on Fund trustees: Jumping to erroneous conclusions***First of three parts*

The political season being what it is, I do feel that the Fund's board of trustees have been done an injustice as a result of comments which appeared in a recent Letter to the Editor published in this paper (Friday, April 17), titled: "*The insolvency of the NMI Retirement Fund.*"

The comments which follow are offered as a clarification and an independent assessment of several issues that appeared in the above letter as considered from the point of view of an economist and one who has not been asked to reply on behalf of, or in defense of, the Fund's trustees.

Being a member I am interested in the long-term financial viability of the Fund and submit my opinion of the stewardship of Fund's operation in contrast to that of the writer of the above letter. In the vein of Nehru's observation, "it is right that we should encourage honest criticism and have as much public discussion of our problems as possible."

The various published accusations leveled at the Fund's trustees and my personal response to each follows—all of which are independent of Fund encouragement, endorsement or sanction. I alone bear the responsibility for the accuracy my comments and opinions.

**Accusation or Statement:** "*Trustees of the Retirement Fund are responsible for policy making issues of the organization. It makes decisions on the hiring of money managers—experts on investments—the annual budget of the fund, among others.*"

**Response:** This is true.

**Accusation or Statement:** "*It seems fair game for trustees to shift the financial debacle of the Fund to the administration and Legislature.*"

**Response:** I call attention to a statement made by Speaker Fitial during his legislative tenure as quoted in the June 8, 2004 edition of the *Marianas Variety* stating: "The Fund should be far more concerned about receiving the long overdue employer contributions from the central government which amounts to about \$84 million. If the Retirement Fund should sue anybody it should be the government."

Thus the above statement of the former Speaker of the Legislature and current Governor did—at that time—openly support the action of Fund trustees to seek redress from the government.

Constant and regular demands on the part of the trustees to the government to pay what is owed the Fund have been thoroughly documented in the lawsuit currently before the court.

Trustees and staff appearances before the Legislature together with meetings with the administration, Secretary of Finance, and delinquent agencies have been met only by empty promises time after time.

During the Retirement Month proclamation in September 2007 the Governor stated to those present that he would reinstate the 37 percent employer contribution. I'm told this has not happened.

During the deliberation on the defined contribution plan, the trustees presented the case on behalf of members, opposing any write-off of the millions of debt the government owes the Fund.

In summary, Fund objections and opposition to the decreased employer's contribution rate have all been documented in letters transmitted to both the Legislature and Governor.

For the past several years the Executive Branch of the Commonwealth government has consistently and intentionally neglected to adhere to 1CMC, Div. 8, Chapter 4, Section 8342 and 1 CMC, Div. 8, Chapter 7, Section 8371 (a) thru (f) as related to its matching contribution to the Fund for subsequent and timely deposit to the Fund's account for later use in the payment of pensions and possibly payroll taxes collected under the mirror image of the IRS code. Nor have funds earmarked for the retirement account been available for investment in interest earning instruments. This lamentable situation has continued uncorrected without adequate relief for so many years it is tantamount to theft by deception and may possibly involve the abridgment of federal law.

The long and the short of it is that the government "owes" retirees their pension. Since it's easier for the government to simply stop paying what it owes the Fund than to break its contact with the retirees, it has chosen to let the Fund go broke and die an unnatural death so it can be done with it—RIP. The result being that the government can take the money it would otherwise use to pay pensions and spend it for other purposes. What do you suppose they might be?

After years of not paying the Fund what it owes, is there a new power plant? Is there 24-hour, islandwide, potable water? Adequate educational and medical facilities? You tell me, what has the government done with the huge sums it has gained by not paying its financial obligation to the Fund?

**Accusation:** "*Trustees conveniently ignore that it is a part of this messy equation but want us to look the other way rather than taking a critical look at its ineptitude.*"

**Response:** This is blatantly false: The trustees—and in particular the current chairman—have been very active in attempting to sound the alarm regarding the dire financial condition of an ever shrinking investment portfolio base which, if not immediately corrected and the financial hemorrhage arrested, will result in a bankrupt fund in from 3 to 5 years. This neglect cannot be blamed on the Fund's trustees or its dedicated staff. The fault for the deteriorating condition of the Fund is not a result of the ineptitude of the trustees but rather is the fault of the central government and a recalcitrant Legislature—past and present—that created the so-called "messy equation."

It seems to me that to criticize the competence of the Fund's board of trustees is to criticize the judgment of the Governor who appointed them. I happen to think that the trustees are doing a good job under very trying circumstances.

**Accusation:** "*While it shifts the blame, the program sinks deeper into the red sea of insolvency.*"

**Response:** The trustees are not shifting blame; they are simply stating the true facts that the cause of the financial "meltdown" currently facing the 3,000 or so members' retirement security is directly a result of the indifference of the central government and the "institutional ineptitude" of the Legislature. Actually, truth be known, it is the other way around, as the blame for the "messy equation" lies not with the Fund's trustees but precisely and directly with those who wish to deflect blame away from themselves, particularly during this election year.

*To be continued.*

**William H. Stewart**  
via e-mail

*P.S. Since 2004, I have published more than 50 "op-ed" pieces concerning the deteriorating condition of the member's retirement security. These articles may be reviewed in the archives of this paper by entering my name in the archives search bar. For economic credentials Google: saipanstewart.com (open on "Home").*

**In a bet there is a fool and a thief—Anonymous**

It is *deja vu* all over again. Can anyone remember when video poker was being introduced to the CNMI decades ago? Do you remember how the poker advocates and many of our leaders insisted that we had nothing to worry about because only our tourists would play poker? Fast forward to today. How many tourists do we see playing poker? Because the CNMI government savors the millions made on poker fees each year, many of our leaders turn a blind eye to a poker industry that does more harm than good. Perhaps they should talk to our family court judges, our prosecutors and public defenders, our counselors, our social workers, our parish priests, our doctors and nurses, and our police officers. Then maybe they will begin to understand why we need to get rid of poker altogether.

It makes me cringe when I hear our leaders say that the economic benefits of poker outweigh everything else, and that the CNMI just can't afford to lose the poker industry. What rubbish! These leaders fail to understand that every dollar pumped into a poker machine is a dollar less circulated in our local economy. In South Carolina, a study on video poker reported that while the state took in \$122 million in revenue, it actually cost South Carolina \$422 million, which included regulation, compulsive gambling, and other social and economic costs (Thompson, William N., Ph.D. and Frank L. Quinn, Ph.D., *An Economic Analysis of Machine Gambling in South Carolina*)

So how do our local poker proponents protect their greedy interests? By connecting poker revenues with college scholarships, namely SHEFA. It has become an emotional ploy for the poker parlors, which is, "Take away poker parlors and you take away my

child's college education." Perhaps a more accurate statement coming from the neglected children of poker addicts would be, "Take away poker parlors and you give me back my mom and dad."

In 2007, many of our leaders pledged to get rid of poker in the villages when they were running for office. How quickly they forgot their promises once they were elected! Perhaps in this upcoming election, we need to remind them that we didn't forget their empty promises. While business fees are being increased exponentially and unfairly in this dismal economy, several of our leaders want to make an exemption to poker. In fact, they want to lower the fees! Why? So that we will have *more* poker parlors, thereby stimulating more poker revenues. This is incomprehensible. We need more poker parlors and poker addicts in the CNMI like we need more prostitutes and ice dealers in the CNMI.

And now, of all things, there are leaders up on Capital Hill who are welcoming and encouraging an ally to poker: pachinko. HB 16-225 proposes to lower the annual fee for pachinko slot machines from \$6,000 to \$2,000. According to the bill, "More machines offered will entice more players, translating to more license fee revenue and jackpot winning taxes for the general fund." I don't know if our leaders are aware of this, but tourists will not flock to Saipan to play pachinko! They come to Saipan to frolic on our beautiful beaches and to see our spectacular sunsets and scenery!

To add insult to injury, the 2009 Liberation Day Committee is pushing for Las Vegas-type gambling booths to generate more funds. Gambling associated with Liberation Day? Really? Kids on carnival rides while parents are drinking and gambling their pay-

checks away? Do we really want to market gambling at a family-focused event? Gambling at the Liberation Day grounds is a recipe for disaster, and I hope and pray that the Attorney General's Office rejects their proposal.

My dear friends, haven't we learned our lesson from the evil associated with poker? Who has really gotten rich off of poker anyway? Is it our society, or is it the poker parlor owners? Machines that are programmed to win and that have caused rampant social problems here in our small community do not enrich our community; rather, they destroy it.

So what can we do as concerned community members? For starters, we need to call, write, and mount pressure on our leaders and let them know that we strongly oppose poker in our villages and legislation that encourages more gambling in our society. We also need our spiritual leaders of every denomination to publicly denounce this disgraceful, longstanding threat to our society in their homilies and in letters to their faithful followers. As a Catholic, I would love to see our beloved Bishop Camacho lead this crusade against gambling, and I am sure there are many parishioners who would gladly volunteer to help him.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, "Shallow men believe in luck. Strong men believe in cause and effect." We all must realize that if we truly want our economy to flourish once again, we need to stop believing in luck and start believing again in an honest day's work.

**Ed Propst**  
Dandan, Saipan

**THE FBI***From Page 10*

With not even a rudimentary knowledge of English, a 12-year-old daughter she left with her parents, and not particularly a drop dead beauty queen, she groveled herself into survival both in the profession and hopefully, out of it soon. She said once, "I had only one *lao gong* (old man) in China; here, I now have plenty!"

She learned to use cosmetics, subtle but suggestive attire, and

choreographed an attractive swagger to her lanky frame. But more importantly, she worked diligently and religiously on her English language that now she is seriously dating a merchant marine. She still makes her living on her back, but she does so with cold detachment, military precision and academy-award quality performance. While she thinks she will recoup her investment in a year, she has decided that she can no longer afford to return home. She has lost too much face, psychologically and socially, that she will become only a source of support for her family, but no longer a presence in their immediate circle of affection. She is hitching her star on the






promises of her new beau.

That there is an unpleasant stink in the sewer comes not from the nature of the sewage but on our refusal to acknowledge it as a part of our community life. Decriminalization of former illicit activities like the trade in the flesh is happening with favorable consequences in many parts of the world. It might be something for the Commonwealth to regulate even if indirectly. Not too long ago, gambling was illegal. Why not keep the blue jackets preoccupied with more serious crimes, and let the ladies ply their trade in good health and social acceptance. Cow town, anyone?

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

# The Weather

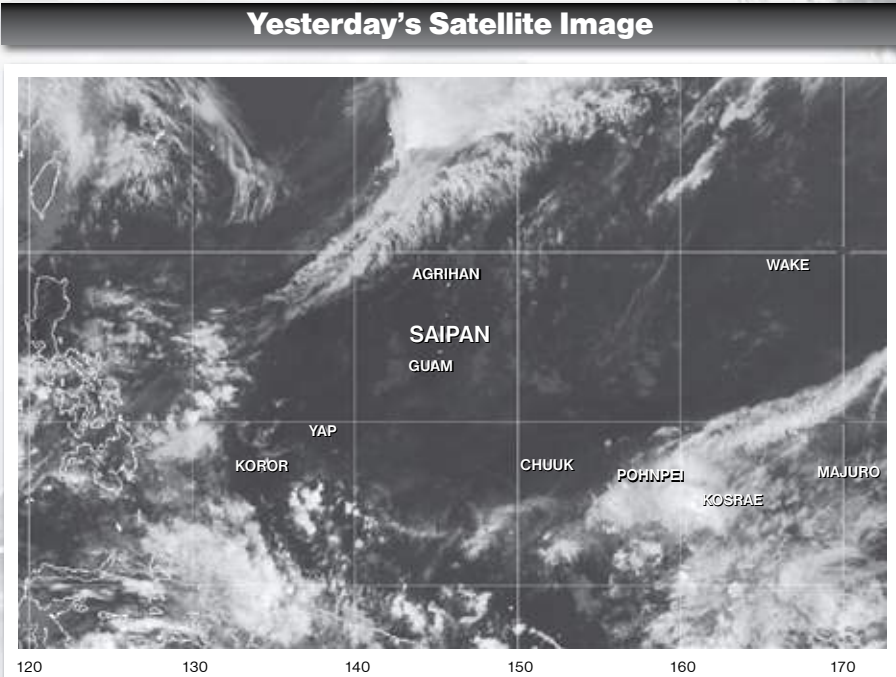
## 5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 5 to 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 5 to 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 87° ▼ 78°	▲ 87° ▼ 78°	▲ 87° ▼ 78°	▲ 87° ▼ 78°	▲ 87° ▼ 78°

Micronesia		
Guam and Rota	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 75
Palau	Cloudy	▲ 86 ▼ 78
Yap	Cloudy	▲ 86 ▼ 77
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 77
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 78
Kosrae	Cloudy	▲ 89 ▼ 77
Majuro	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 80

Around The Globe		
Auckland	Cloudy	▲ 64 ▼ 52
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲ 76 ▼ 51
Hong Kong	Rain	▲ 84 ▼ 74
Honolulu	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 79 ▼ 69
London	Showers	▲ 61 ▼ 43
Los Angeles	Sunny	▲ 90 ▼ 56
Manila	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 77
Melbourne	Partly Sunny	▲ 70 ▼ 54
Miami	Cloudy	▲ 84 ▼ 70
New York	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 47 ▼ 44
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 70 ▼ 61
Paris	Sunny	▲ 63 ▼ 43
Pusan	Rain	▲ 66 ▼ 46
Rome	Rain	▲ 66 ▼ 54
Salem	Sunny	▲ 77 ▼ 45
San Francisco	Sunny	▲ 78 ▼ 51
Seoul	Rain	▲ 59 ▼ 42
Tokyo	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 72 ▼ 62
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 59 ▼ 49

Tides		
Saipan Harbor		
4:41 AM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
10:47 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
3:50 PM Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
10:29 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.4 Feet



**PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, SUNDAY, APRIL 19, 2009**  
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface trough southwest of Chuuk extends from a weak circulation centered at 1N147E northwestward to 10N140E. Low-level convergence along the trough axis is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms east of Koror and south of Yap between 8N and 3N from 137E to 142E. A surface trough south of Koror extends northwestward from EQ140E past 6N130E. Scattered showers are found within 50 miles of line extending from 8N131E to 1N133E to EQ138E. Trade-wind convergence is generating a large area of scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms over the Marshall Islands westward to Kosrae bounded by a line from 3N158E to 10N170E to EQ170E to EQ158E back to 3N158E. A nearly stationary front extends southwestward from a circulation centered at 25N137E past 21N130E. Cloudiness and patchy showers can be found along and up to 300 miles north of a line from 25N143E to 20N138E to 15N130E.

Sunrise/Sunset			Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	6:00 AM	6:32 PM	Today	2:19 AM	2:14 PM
Tuesday	5:59 AM	6:32 PM	Tuesday	2:56 AM	3:04 PM
Wednesday	5:59 AM	6:33 PM	Wednesday	3:32 AM	3:54 PM
Thursday	5:58 AM	6:33 PM	Thursday	4:10 AM	4:46 PM
Friday	5:58 AM	6:33 PM	Friday	4:50 AM	5:41 PM

## GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

**PICTURES**

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS  
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS  
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS  
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI  
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE  
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

■ **CAMPUS BULLETIN**  
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**For pictures:**

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

**For announcements:**

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan  
To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 12, 2009				
DEPARTURES			ARRIVALS	
Saipan-Rota			Rota-Saipan	
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm 1,7	CO 9598	3:25am 4:00am 5,6
Saipan-Guam			Guam-Saipan	
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am Daily	CO 9316	2:30am 3:20am 1,2,3,4,7
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am Daily	CO9598	2:30am 4:00am 5,6 via Rota
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm 1,7 via Rota	CO9596	7:00am 7:50am Daily
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6	CO9600	10:20am 11:10am Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm Daily	CO9602	2:00pm 2:50pm Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm Daily	CO9604	5:00pm 5:50pm Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm Daily	CO9606	8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita			Narita-Saipan	
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am Daily	NW 076	10:15am 2:40pm Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm 2,3,4,5,6,7	NW 077	6:25pm 1:20am+1 2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm Daily	NW 100	8:45pm 1:10am+1 Daily
Guam-Narita			Narita-Guam	
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm Daily	NW 74	9:45am 2:20pm Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm Daily	NW 82	10:30am 3:10pm Daily
Saipan-Osaka			Osaka-Saipan	
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am 1,4,6	OZ 120	9:50pm 2:20am+1 3,5,7
Guam-Osaka			Osaka-Guam	
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm Daily	NW 80	10:30am 3:00pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			Nagoya-Saipan	
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am Daily	NW 077	9:00pm 1:20am+1 Daily
Guam-Nagoya			Nagoya-Guam	
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm Daily	NW 24	10:00am 2:30pm Daily
Saipan-Incheon			Incheon-Saipan	
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am 1	OZ 605	9:00am 2:20pm Daily
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7	OZ 603	7:40pm 1:00am+1 7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am 1,4,6 via Osaka	OZ 120	7:10pm 2:20am+1 3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm Daily	OZ 603	8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan			Busan-Saipan	
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am 1,4,5,7	OZ 607	9:00pm 2:10am+1 3,4,6,7
Saipan-Shanghai			Shanghai-Saipan	
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am 2,6	FM 843	7:15pm 1:50am+1 1,5
Rota-Guam			Guam-Rota	
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm 1,7	CO 9598	2:30am 3:00am 5,6
Guam-Palau			Palau-Guam	
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm 1,7	CO 954	2:30am 5:25am 1,2
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm 3,5	CO 892	2:35am 5:30am 4,6
Palau-Manila			Manila-Palau	
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm 3,5	CO 892	10:10pm 1:50am+1 3,5
Guam-Manila			Manila-Guam	
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm 3,5 via Koror	CO 892	10:10pm 5:30am+1 3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm Daily	CO 934	11:10pm 4:40am+1 Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am 1,2,4,6,7	PR 110	10:10pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			Manila-Nagoya	
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm Daily	NW 72	6:30am 11:05am Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			Hongkong-Incheon	
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm Daily	OZ 724	12:30am 4:50am Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm Daily	OZ 7183	12:45am 5:05am 1,4,6
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm 5,7	OZ 722	1:30pm 5:45pm Daily
Narita-Manila			Manila-Narita	
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm Daily	NW 2	7:45am 12:40pm Daily
Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)				

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ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

## FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
<b>Guam-Rota</b>				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
<b>Saipan-Rota</b>				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily	<b>Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**</b>			
<b>Guam-Rota</b>				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
<b>Rota-Saipan</b>				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily	FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
<b>Saipan-Rota</b>				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily	FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
<b>Rota-Guam</b>				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily	FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
<b>Saipan-Tinian</b>				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily	FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				



## NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- \*11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at [www.nmicrimestoppers.com](http://www.nmicrimestoppers.com)

# A sniper's precision view to a kill

The three quick shots off the fantail of the USS Bainbridge that terminated the piracy incident in the Indian Ocean early Sunday night made a number of points for various pointy-headed political pundits to chew on, cudlike, for a few weeks. But one they'll probably miss is the following: The three shots make clear to a wider public what has been clear to people who pay attention to such things—we are in the golden age of the sniper.

He has become a kind of chivalric hero. He is the state, speaking in thunder, restoring order to the moral universe. Or he is civilization, informing the barbarians of the fecklessness of their plight. He is the line in the sand, the point of the spear, the man with the rifle, one of the few, the proud. He is also the intellectual of combat, in some ways, bringing a cool logic to what is normally hot, messy and exhausting.

We vest in him the right to kill in our name and it seems, at least to some extent, we no longer hold it against him that he does so from a long way out, usually in darkness and silence. Instead, we wish him godspeed. He's no longer Lee Harvey Oswald. He's Carlos Hatchcock, the legendary Marine Corps sniper, or Chuck Mawhinney, who holds the Marine Corps sniper kill record in Vietnam, or the two posthumous Battle of Mogadishu Medal of Honor recipients, the Delta snipers Randy Shughart and Gary Gordon. And now, he is the Navy SEALs who shot the Somali pirates and saved Capt. Richard Phillips.

Technology and necessity have combined to make the sniper the go-to guy in military operations, even given him a kind of glamour.

The business of felling a bad guy with one shot has never been more refined. Briefly—this isn't Guns & Ammo, after all—new optical hardware and ballistic innovations have made the sniper more effective than he's ever been. Since Vietnam, the military sniper weapon has been a bolt-action .30-caliber Remington rifle, effective to a thousand yards. In the past two decades, however, heavier-caliber weapons have been deployed to greatly further the shooter's range.

Now, using .50-caliber weapons, snipers regularly hit beyond a mile, and there's a whole new lineup of weapons between .30 and .50 calibers—the .338 Lapua, the .416 Barrett, the .408 CheyTac—

that commandeer the range between 1,000 and 2,000 yards. On top of that, laser range-finding and chip-driven portable software enable the shooter to solve heretofore impenetrable ballistic equations, and index their sights precisely for that one-shot kill way, way out there.

Sunday's mission demanded the utmost in skill and concentration, this after an arduous trek inward (by parachute and small boat to the Bainbridge at near dark on Saturday). Details will emerge, but I'm guessing the three SEALs were each equipped with a rifle called the SR-25, said to be the choice of SEAL snipers. It's a semiautomatic, for fast follow-up shots, and looks like an M-16 on growth hormones.

It almost certainly wears a tube at the muzzle, what you would call a silencer, what the community calls a suppressor. The point, for this kind of shooting, is that it's unlikely the three shooters would try to fire simultaneously; they probably shot over a few seconds, and the unthwarted report of the first rifle might have caused Targets 2 and 3 to withdraw. As it transpired, no pirate likely figured out what happened to his colleagues in the seconds before it happened to him.

Perhaps the pirates didn't realize the SEALs would be equipped with the refined technology of night vision. They thought they were safe, crouching behind the cabin of their life boat, peering over it at the big dark bulk of the Bainbridge 50 feet or so ahead. Actually, they were quite obvious to the shooters eyeing them through a somewhat awkward device, like a telescopic lens, but bloated, more complex, more powerful, built around the ability to intensify the ambient light. To the snipers, the pirates were as green as the witch in "The Wizard of Oz," and their eyes glowed. Meanwhile, some kind of index point—cross hairs, a chevron, a simple glowing dot—marked the bullet's point of impact, having been adjusted to the proper range in advance.

So what is going on in the sniper's mind as he waits—I'm guessing he's prone, the most stable shooting position—in the dark, on the overhang at the extreme rear of the ship? He's crucially aware

**By STEPHEN HUNTER**

Special to The Washington Post

*Hunter, a former chief film critic at The Washington Post, is the creator of a series of novels featuring the sniper Bob Lee Swagger. His next book, to be published in October, is I, Sniper.*



of his breathing rhythm, because he wants to fire between breaths. He probably doesn't think much about trigger pull. He wouldn't be here if he didn't know how to pull a trigger. He's not "pulling" it in the sense of exerting his muscle against it, so much as urging it to cooperate it, massaging it into doing his bidding. If he hurries, if his finger is misplaced on its curve or catches on the trigger guard beneath it, it can all go wrong.

It can go wrong, too, if he neglects the follow-through, because like all athletic endeavors, shooting or pitching or throwing or tossing a crumple of paper into a wastebasket, the issue is the wholeness of motion, even long after the missile is dispatched.

Oh, and he has to do all that on instant notice with someone's life on the line, and if he misses, the burden of shame will be crushing.

What does he feel? The joke, much told, is that when asked what he felt when he took a man's life, the sniper answered, "Recoil." I suspect that's nonsense. But I also suspect these men are pure alphas, with unnatural levels of aggression and strength, which is magnified by their willingness to drive such larger questions down deeper and hold them far away from the duty mind. What they feel, then, is simple: None of your damn business.

## Susan Boyle's defiant 'Dream'

**By JEANNE MCMANUS**  
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

One of the engines that drives a cynical world in general and reality TV in particular is sparked by the friction between self-perception and fact. There's nothing quite like a stage and the hot spotlights of shows such as "American Idol" to make it clear to Everyman that his own measure of self-worth has just collided with a wall of three judges, and the results are messy blood sport for the viewing public.

Onto such a stage last weekend—for the show "Britain's Got Talent"—came Susan Boyle, and the setup was ripe. The solid-looking Scot in sensible shoes and a dress the color of weak tea strode forward with the purposefulness of a woman who was going to dig a furrow for spring potatoes.

She had a streak of playfulness and shyness and a broad swath of uncowering dignity. And pride. She wanted to measure her talents against those of Ellen Paige, a British legend.

The eye-rolling public and the three jaded judges were waiting for her to squawk like a duck.

When I first saw the grainy, blurred You Tube version of her performance of "I Dreamed a Dream," I kept looking for evidence of fraud despite the standing ovations of the live audience. From the first line of the first stanza, the confident yet angelic voice did not seem to match the workaday face and dark brows of the woman who was singing. It's a song about the loss of innocence and optimism. I hate the song. I hate "Les Misérables," the musical from which it comes. But I could not take my eyes off Susan Boyle, and I could not stop listening to her poised, pure notes, her perfect enunciation, her self-assured emotion. So I kept playing the song, and replaying it. I am usually front-row center in any audience of cynics, and I'm still not sick of it.

Sure, it would be nice if Boyle goes on to win the finals of this competition—and even to meet the queen. But to me that's not the point. In a world sometimes rife with bloated resumes, stage mothers, fawning friends, self-adulation, narcissism and bedroom shelves holding too many meaningless trophies from middle school, here is a woman who took an accurate measure of her worth and put it to the test in the white-hot crucible of reality TV.

There's nothing wrong with pride. It's false pride that is the problem.

For now, the 47-year-old single woman has returned to Blackburn, her small village in Scotland, where I pray she can be preserved and defended from stylists, colorists, manicurists, eyebrow waxers, record producers, morning talk shows and other makeover mavens who will seek to dye her roots, define her waistline and steal her purity.

Which brings me to another point: Susan Boyle says she has never been kissed.

Men of Blackburn: What are you waiting for?

*Jeanne McManus, a former Washington Post editor, is an occasional contributor to the op-ed page.*

## Letters to the Editor

### Brownsfield project in Marpi

We have been working closely with EPA Region 9's Mr. Arora Pankaj on the ongoing Brownsfield ordnance removal project in Marpi as we do have serious concerns on the how this project is being carried out. We can all agree and support the importance of removing unexploded ordnance around our island but we disagree on the fast-tracked nature of the project. The intensity and mass destruction of our natural land is beyond comprehension and I have stated that there is a difference between being granted federal funding for the project by EPA and how the project is actually carried out.

We thank Mr. Dave Hodges and Mr. Arora Pankaj of EPA Region 9 San Francisco for responding to this serious matter. EPA responding is a sign that our concerns are valid. It is important our people and our community are made aware of what is going on in our surroundings and that public hearing must be stretched out 30 to 60

days instead of one or two days. As in the case of this Brownsfield project, only one individual attended the public hearing back in 2007. The people of the Commonwealth should be given the time and the courtesy to get involved in discussions, dialogs before any major project takes place so that our concerns and inputs are addressed. Something that most government agencies and elected leaders fail to understand is the importance of public involvement.

We look forward to meeting with Mr. Arora Pankaj of EPA first week of May 2009. If anyone is interested in participating in such discussions with Mr. Arora Pankaj, we can be reached at 256-8652 or send e-mail to taotaotanopres@gmail.com.

**Gregorio Cruz Jr.**  
*Taotao Tano CNMI Inc.*

### Labor reform badly needed

I must say that I was very impressed when I walked into Super Fresh Market. I saw nothing but local employees. This just shows that the mentality that locals are lazy is just plain wrong. Super Fresh Market is a business that is in touch with today's CNMI. Unfortunately, our labor laws are out of touch with today's CNMI. Currently, only a measly 20 percent resident hire is required for private businesses. Resident workers must cover their own medical expenses, while contract workers enjoy having their medical expenses paid for by their employers. Federalization has been delayed for six months. Labor reform is needed to protect our resident workforce. Increase the mandatory resident hire from 20 percent to 35 percent. The upcoming minimum wage increases will entice more residents to turn to the private sector, while the government continues to threaten employees with austerity measures such as austerity Fridays, layoffs, and unpaid holidays. Aren't the laws supposed to protect the resident

workforce as well or are they only meant to protect the nonresidents? There is nothing wrong with having nonresident workers. The only problem is, they outnumber the resident workers big time. The more resident workers we employ, the more money gets invested in the CNMI. Less money would leave the CNMI for the Philippines, China, Korea, Bangladesh, Nepal, etc.

Kudos to Kagman Joeten, Kagman Mobil, Super Fresh Market and other businesses for supporting the local workforce. Kudos to Northern Marianas Trades Institute for training resident workers to replace the nonresident workers in the vocational field.

Support the local workforce. Support local products. Support local services. Support local education. Export more, import less. It is for the sake of our economy.

**Jesse Torres**  
*Kagman*

### Fund's real estate program

About two decades ago, the Fund got into the real estate program for targeted members. While the intent is noble it is, however, a discriminatory creature of the trustees. In other words, the real estate loan program must include *all* members!

This program was subsequently scrapped but it doesn't change the fact that it has discriminated against other members. It's simple to discern that if loans for this purpose originate from the money contributed by all members, obviously *all* must be able to avail of it. To do otherwise would be a perfect recipe for a single or class action lawsuit.

So what's my beef as a member? It's asinine for the Fund to engage in a housing program when its purpose is investment of Fund money. It adds to the cost of the operations of the Fund, catering specifically to a select group of retirees. Do you see where I am coming from?

As such, I want to know how much of the Fund's money was spent on this discriminatory program. Information should include the number of retirees who benefited from it, the repayment plan, how much has been collected and if borrowers are up-to-date with their payments.

It would be interesting to figure out the entire nine yards in a scheme where the Fund has decided to enter the housing program that is basically the role of banks and the Northern Marianas Housing Corp.

I definitely want trustees and management to get to the hierarchical roots of the Fund's financial mess. Unless this is done forthwith with full disclosure of the entire nine yards, the Fund would simply be promoting confusion upon piles of confusion. Clarity of the issue is a must on this matter.

Now, let's see the Fund explain to retirees and members the total sum used for its real estate program; the outset, including administrative costs and other expenses incurred for sliding into a venture that is best left solely to retirees and loaning institutions. I expect an explanation forthwith from both trustees and management. As a member, I deserve to know nothing less!

**John S. DelRosario Jr.**  
*As Gonno, Saipan*

# Business

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### Wanted: Computer hackers... to help government

WASHINGTON (AP)—Wanted: Computer hackers. Federal authorities aren't looking to prosecute them, but to pay them to secure the nation's networks. General Dynamics Information Technology put out an ad last month on behalf of the Homeland Security Department seeking someone who could "think like the bad guy." Applicants, it said, must understand hackers' tools and tactics and be able to analyze Internet traffic and identify vulnerabilities in the federal systems. In the Pentagon's budget request submitted last week, Defense Secretary Robert Gates said the Pentagon will increase the number of cyberexperts it can train each year from 80 to 250 by 2011.

### China's premier says economy better than expected

BOAO, China (AP)—Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said Saturday the country's stimulus package is working and the economy is "better than expected," but he cautioned that complete recovery will take much more time because the global financial crisis continues to spread. Wen, also China's top economic official, pledged to pull the country out of its slump by expanding domestic demand, building major infrastructure projects, finding jobs for college students and improving the social safety net. Wen spoke at the Boao Forum, an annual gathering of government and business leaders on the tropical southern island province of Hainan.

### Congress considers major global warming measure

WASHINGTON (AP)—The last time Congress passed major environmental laws, acid rain was destroying lakes and forests, polluted rivers were on fire and smog was choking people in some cities. The fallout from global warming, while subtle now, could eventually be more dire. That prospect has Democrats pushing legislation that rivals in scope the nation's landmark anti-pollution laws. Lawmakers this coming week begin hearings on an energy and global warming bill that could revolutionize how the country produces and uses energy. It also could reduce, for the first time, the pollution responsible for heating up the planet. If Congress balks, the Obama administration has signaled a willingness to use decades-old clean air laws to impose tough new regulations for motor vehicles and many industrial plants to limit their release of climate-changing pollution.

### MySpace hopes to turn free songs into needed cash

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—In 2004, when MySpace was still getting going, recording label executive Courtney Holt noticed that musicians were using the Web site to connect more intimately with their fans, through detailed blogs and behind-the-scenes photos. So Holt arranged to meet MySpace's founders. "I remember going into his office when we were very small," said MySpace co-founder Chris DeWolfe, "when most other companies wouldn't pay attention to us." Holt, then a marketing vice president with Interscope Geffen A&M, urged bands such as Nine Inch Nails, Weezer and The Black Eyed Peas to nurture MySpace profile pages too. The bands streamed new songs for free on their MySpace profiles, and some had the best album launches of their careers. "The artists loved it and it created a Pied Piper effect for the fans," Holt said. When it came to music promotion, Holt realized, MySpace was like a "fire hose." Now, Holt is being asked to turn MySpace's attention to a music industry in flames - and in the process, to improve the mediocre finances of MySpace as it tries to fend off rival Facebook.

### Fla. to test air in homes with Chinese drywall

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) -- Officials in Florida will soon begin air quality tests in homes to determine whether fumes emitted from Chinese-made drywall can make people sick, the state Health Department said Friday. An Associated Press review of shipping records found more than 540 million pounds of plasterboard was imported from China between 2004 and 2008 to meet U.S. demand during the national housing boom. Hundreds of people nationwide are now complaining that the material emits fumes that make them sick. They claim it also corrodes copper pipes, blackens jewelry and silverware and ruins air conditioners.

## APAFS sets Country Conference in Palau

The Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies is continuing its 2009 series of Country Conferences for fiduciaries of investment funds throughout the region. APAFS will be holding the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Palau Country Conference on Friday May 1, 2009, at the Ngarayameyong Cultural Center.

An APAFS Country Conference is a one-day affair that provides educational sessions on topics specifically requested by members in their respective jurisdictions. The topics and session leaders for this year's Palau Country Conference include:

The Prudent Process: Managing



Mendiola-Long

Fiduciary Responsibility: Philip Mendiola-Long, AIF, Sherman Consulting;

The Effect of the Economic Crisis on Retirement Plans in the Region: David J. John, president, ASC Trust Company;



Cruz

Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies - Update on our Mission: Gerard A. Cruz, chairman, APAFS;

Financial Crisis on a Global Scale: Jason B. Miyashita, AIF, CRPS, Citi Smith Barney/ Consulting Group;



Miyashita

### ON THE NET

www.apafs.org

Domestic and International Capital Markets Outlook: James D. Staub, senior vice president, Atalanta Sosnoff Capital Corp.

The Palau conference will be the fifth of the series of regional conferences for 2009, which will culminate in the 9th Annual Pacific Region Investment Conference to be held in Manila, the Philippines, on Oct. 8 and 9 at the Renaissance Hotel, Makati.

About APAFS: The Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies) a non-profit educational association with the aim of providing educational forums for fiduciaries in the region. It was formed in 2000. (PR)

## iConnect offers Motorola Stature i9

### TAMUNING, Guam

iConnect announced Friday the upcoming availability of the Motorola Stature i9, a Razor inspired handset which is the thinnest flip phone in the iConnect portfolio.

The Motorola Stature i9 will be available at iConnect by the end of April and on display at Phare 2009 at the Hyatt Hotel, April 16-18.

The Motorola Stature i9 includes a fantastic feature set such as a slim design at only 15mm, a 3.1 mega pixel camera with flash and auto-focus, a music player and integrated GPS, the ability to store up to 8GB of images, videos and music and more.

"This cool new handset brings iConnect in line with the mid-to-high level handsets in this market. It represents Motorola's commitment in advancing the features of Push-2-Talk and phones and by the looks of things it will be

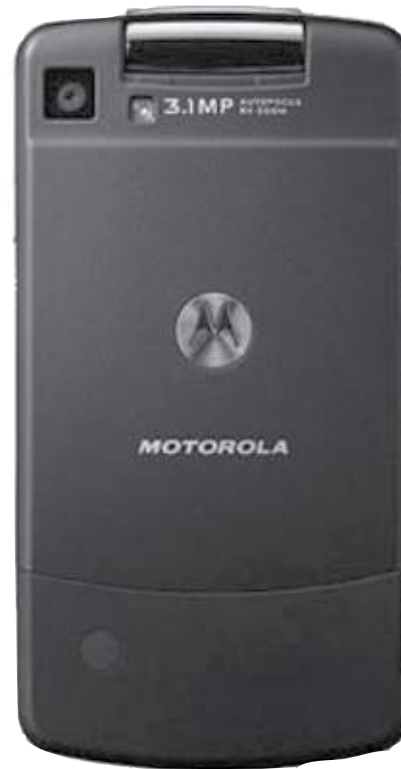


The Motorola Stature i9

a head turner," said Matt Giger, vice president at iConnect. "The i9 really represents

a significant change in our handset

history. We often compare the iConnect handset evolution to that of the GM Hummer. The Hummer was a military spec transport/support vehicle equipped for ultra-rugged use, then reintroduced commercially wrapped in leather



and chrome. The i9 is that same tough and durable phone that you would expect from Motorola and iConnect wrapped in a feature rich clamshell with two vivid color display screens and touch capabilities. Again, this shows Motorola's commitment to all

the iDen-Type Push-2-Talk providers around the world (Sprint/Nextel, Boost Mobile and Telus) and the continued commitment to the technology."

This will be a first of its kind for iConnect. The addition of Motorola Stature i9 Razor to iConnect's diverse handset line up further exemplifies iConnect's commitment to meeting the needs of every consumer. iConnect offers a full suite of solutions for every customer with a range of handsets to choose from and budget-friendly, dependable services such as their new \$59.99 Monthly Unlimited plan.

"From entry-level to high-end, iConnect is connecting the unconnected to the largest group of Push-2-Talk users in the region. We believe we have something for everyone," said Giger.

iConnect will be offering the new Motorola Stature i9 Razor through all iConnect locations. To get more information see www.icconnectguam.com or call 888-8888. (PR)

## Obama wants suggestions to cut govt spending waste

WASHINGTON (AP)—Families are making tough decisions about their money and so too will their government, President Barack Obama said Saturday, promising that spending cuts are coming - and soon.

At a Cabinet meeting Monday,

confidence in their government - that it is on their side, spending their money wisely, to meet their families' needs," Obama said in his weekly radio and Internet address, released while he attended the Summit of the Americans in

Trinidad.

To help achieve his goal of an efficient government, Obama announced the appoint-

### ON THE NET

- Obama address: <http://www.whitehouse.gov>
- McCarthy address: <http://www.youtube.com/RepublicanConference>
- Portfolio Logic: <http://www.portfoliologic.com>

the president will ask department and agency heads for specific proposals for trimming their budgets.

"If we're going to rebuild our economy on a solid foundation, we need to change the way we do business in Washington. We need to restore the American people's

ment of Jeffrey Zients, a founder and managing partner of the investment firm Portfolio Logic, as chief performance officer. Zients, who also will serve as deputy director for management of the Office of Management and Budget, will work to streamline processes and cut costs.

## 2 more banks fail, lifting this year's tally to 25

NEWYORK (AP)—Regulators on Friday shut down two more banks, boosting the number of failures this year to as many as in all of last year.

The tally of 25 bank failures this year all but guarantees the number that fall into the arms of regulators will surpass what was seen in 2008. Two of the nation's largest savings and loans failed in 2008: Washington Mutual Inc. and IndyMac Bank. Last year's total was more than in the previous five years combined and up from only three failures in 2007.

The latest banks seized were American Sterling Bank in Missouri and Great Basin Bank of Nevada. The Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. will continue to insure deposits. Regular deposit accounts are insured up to \$250,000.

Customers of both banks can still write checks and use ATM or debit cards.

The federal Office of Thrift Supervision took over American Sterling, while the Nevada Financial Institutions Division took control of Great Basin Bank of Nevada. The FDIC was appointed receiver of both banks.

The Missouri offices of American Sterling will reopen Saturday. Those in California and Arizona will open Monday. All will open as branches of Metcalf Bank. Depositors of American Sterling will automatically become depositors of Metcalf.

American Sterling is based in Sugar Creek, Mo. It had \$181 million in assets and \$171.9 million in deposits as of March 20. In addition to assuming the deposits of the failed bank, Metcalf Bank, based in Lee's Summit, Mo., agreed to buy about \$173.6 million in assets. The FDIC will retain the rest of the assets to sell later.

# Nation

## Couple, their 3 kids found dead in Maryland home

By ALEX DOMINGUEZ  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

**MIDDLETOWN, Md. (AP)**—An accountant for a railroad operator killed his wife and their three children before fatally shooting himself in a northwest Maryland home, leaving a gruesome scene that was discovered Saturday by the youngsters' grandfather, authorities said.

Authorities didn't specify a motive but said there was evidence the man faced psychiatric and financial problems.

When investigators arrived

at the two-story home, the couple's two sons, ages 5 and 4, lay dead in their beds, while the bodies of a 2-year-old daughter and the mother, Francis Billotti Wood, were in the master bedroom, Frederick County sheriff's office spokeswoman Jennifer Bailey said. On the master bedroom floor by the foot of the bed was the father, 34-year-old Christopher Alan Wood, dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, Bailey said.

The 33-year-old mother and three children suffered "traumatic cuts" and each also had at

least one gunshot wound from a .25-caliber handgun, Frederick County Sheriff Charles Jenkins said. Their precise cause of death wasn't immediately known, and Jenkins declined to say what was used to slash them.

The woman's father found them dead around 9 a.m. He had grown concerned after not hear-

ing from them for several days, Bailey said.

Christopher Wood apologized to family members in one of five notes he wrote and left at the scene, and he indicated in a note that he had psychiatric problems, Jenkins said. The sheriff wouldn't elaborate on what else was written in the notes.



A priest comforts people walking next to the house in Middletown, Md. on Saturday, April 18, 2009 where five bodies were found.

## US to boycott United Nations racism meeting

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—The Obama administration will boycott "with regret" a U.N. conference on racism next week over objectionable language in the meeting's final document that could single out Israel for criticism and restrict free speech, the State Department said Saturday.

The decision follows weeks of furious internal debate and will likely please Israel and Jewish groups that lobbied against U.S. participation. But the move upset human rights advocates and some in the African-American community who had hoped that President Barack Obama, the nation's first black president, would send an official delegation.

The administration had

wanted to attend the April 20-25 meeting in Geneva, although it warned in late February it would not go unless significant changes were made to the draft text.

Some revisions - including the removal of specific critical references to Israel and problematic passages about the defamation of religion - were negotiated for which State Department spokesman Robert Wood said the administration was "deeply grateful."

But he said the text retains troubling elements that suggest support for restrictions on free speech and an affirmation of the findings of the first World Conference Against Racism, held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001 that the U.S. cannot endorse.

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### Police: 'strong connection' in Boston, RI attacks

**BOSTON (AP)**—Boston police say they believe the slaying of a woman at a luxury hotel is connected to an attack on a woman in a Rhode Island hotel days later. They cite "a number of similarities." Boston police haven't explicitly said the same man committed both crimes, though the suspects have similar descriptions. They cite only "a strong connection" in the cases. Police say they've received more than 150 tips about the fatal shooting of Julissa Brisman at the Boston Marriott Copley Place. The New York City woman advertised massage services on Craigslist and had a massage table set up in the room where she was shot Tuesday. The woman attacked Thursday in Warwick, R.I., advertised lap dances on Craigslist. She was held at gunpoint before her husband entered the room and her attacker fled.

#### Former Utah congressman dead of ATV accident

**SALT LAKE CITY (AP)**—Former Utah congressman Bill Orton died in an ATV accident when his machine flipped over on a sand dune at Little Sahara Recreation Area. He was 60. Juab County Sheriff Alden Orme told The Associated Press that Orton died almost immediately of his injuries about 4 p.m. Saturday. Orton, a Democrat, was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1991 to 1997. He ran an unsuccessful campaign for Utah governor in 2000. Orme said Orton was riding alone when his all-terrain vehicle crested a sand dune and the machine crashed, flipping over on him. His body was taken by ambulance to Central Valley Medical Center in Nephi. An autopsy is pending.

#### Husband of accused USC hit-and-run driver arrested

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—A man suspected of pulling a badly injured college student off a

car windshield after a deadly hit-and-run accident was arrested while trying to cross back into the United States from Mexico, police said Saturday. Josue (HOH'-sway) Luna, 32, of Los Angeles, was detained by federal agents at the San Ysidro border crossing Friday after his name prompted a computer alert that he was wanted in Los Angeles, LAPD Officer April Harding said. Luna was jailed on suspicion of being an accessory to the hit-and-run, she said. He was released Saturday on \$50,000 bail. Police contend Luna was a passenger in a car that ran a red light and struck two students in a crosswalk near the University of Southern California on March 29.

#### Columbine families recall loved ones

**LITTLETON, Colo. (AP)**—Lauren Townsend's parents recently were invited to attend the university graduation of a student who had received a scholarship in their daughter's name. "Through tears we're going. 'This could be Lauren. This could just so be Lauren,' and here we were, being able to help her try to get through college," said Dawn Anna. Her daughter was one of 12 students killed at Columbine High School 10 years ago Monday. She was posthumously named a valedictorian of the class of 1999. Anna, her husband, Bruce Beck, and family of slain teacher Dave Sanders gathered at Columbine High's HOPE Library Saturday to share memories of their loved ones. The library replaced the one in which students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold shot most of their victims. Lauren Townsend worked at a no-kill animal shelter and hoped to become a wildlife biologist. Her parents have dedicated a good portion of their time since her death to the Lauren Townsend Memorial Wildlife/Scholarship Fund, which supports organizations that work with wildlife. It began with \$170,000 sent with cards and letters by people around the world after the shootings.

## Officials: 5 Houston children dead in swamped car

**HOUSTON (AP)**—Five Houston children died Saturday after their sedan slid into a rain-swollen ditch when the driver lost control while trying to answer a cell phone, authorities said.

John Cannon, a Houston police spokesman, told several Houston television stations that the driver of the car was the father of four

of the dead children, all 7 or younger. Cannon said the driver was taken for blood-alcohol testing.

The father was among two adults and a 10-year-old girl who escaped the fast-moving current that swept the car 100 feet from where it left the road and made the vehicle inaccessible to emergency workers for

hours, Cannon said.

Houston television station KTRK reported that police said the dead children included 1- and 3-year-old girls and three boys, ages 4, 6 and 7.

Cannon said a passenger told police the driver's cell phone rang, and the driver lost control when he tried to answer it.

Houston Fire Assistant

Chief Omero Longoria said in the online edition of the Houston Chronicle that rescue workers found the car in 9 feet of water about 7:30 p.m. Saturday, 2 1/2 hours after the driver lost control.

The children's deaths brought the weekend death toll to six from massive storms that swept across southeast Texas.

## Thousands in Colorado without power after storm

**DENVER (AP)**—Hundreds of stranded travelers resumed their journeys Saturday after spending the night at shelters when a powerful spring storm walloped the Rocky Mountains and foothills west of Denver with more than 3 feet of snow.

Officials reopened an 80-mile stretch of Interstate 70 between Golden and Vail that had been closed Friday, said Colorado Department of Transportation spokesman Bob Wilson. Drivers were cautioned to expect heavy traffic and sloppy road conditions.

"It's not the I-70 you know in a June afternoon," Wilson said.

Storm warnings were dropped as the bulk of the storm moved east into Kansas.

About 15,000 homes and businesses were without power in Denver and areas north and west of the city. The heavy snow had weighed down power lines and tripped system circuit breakers. Piles of snow and closed roads were preventing crews from reaching some areas, Xcel Energy spokesman Joe Fuentes said, adding that crews

hoped to restore power by 11 a.m. Sunday.

About 3 to 10 inches fell in Denver, but the heaviest of Friday's snow dropped on the foothills west of the city, with 52 inches at Pinecliffe and 36 at Black Hawk, said National Weather Service meteorologist Carl Burroughs.

April is one of the third snowiest month in Colorado, behind March and November, he said.

Some airlines canceled or delayed flights at Denver International Airport even as snow turned to rain Saturday, and travelers were urged to check on their flights before leaving home.

United Airlines, the dominant carrier at DIA, canceled 76 flights Friday, 14 on Saturday and delayed several others, said spokeswoman Robin Urbanski.

The snow had prompted the closure of I-70 between Vail and Golden, and more than 500 people spent the night at American Red Cross shelters in Idaho Springs and Georgetown. The National Guard delivered two truckloads of cots, blankets and food.



A lone pickup truck is driven up a snowpacked road and past a stand of evergreen trees weighted down by heavy, wet snow near the mountain community of Genesee, Colo., on Saturday, April 18, 2009.

# Asia

## Ailing Italian hostage worries RP

JIM GOMEZ  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—The Philippine government has deployed more troops to help secure the release of an ailing Italian aid worker held by al-Qaida-linked militants amid concerns for his health, officials said Sunday, after two hostages walked free from months of harsh jungle captivity.

Police and armed villagers found Swiss Andreas Notter on Saturday walking with a cane near a road in Indanan township on southern Jolo Island, after he apparently escaped or was

abandoned by his Abu Sayyaf captors, Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro said.

Abu Sayyaf militants freed Filipino Mary Jean Lacaba on April 2. Italian Eugenio Vagni, the last of the three International Committee of the Red Cross workers who were kidnapped Jan. 15, remains in the hands of the gunmen in Indanan's humid jungle.

"The fact that he's struggling with hypertension and hernia is a red flag for us," Teodoro told The Associated Press. "We're moving with a sense of immediacy and intensifying our efforts to secure his freedom as soon as possible."

More than 1,000 marines, police and armed village guards will continue surrounding a jungle stronghold near Indanan to exert pressure on the militants holding Vagni, while a group of Muslim clerics tries to negotiate his release, Teodoro said.

Senior Superintendent Julasirim Kasim, chief of police of Sulu province, which includes Jolo, said more police forces have sent in to strengthen the security cordon around the Indanan jungle where Vagni was being held. He declined to provide other details but other officials said the additional forces included a special commando unit.

## Communist party surges as Japanese economy withers

**TOKYO (AP)**—Under a big red flag, the headquarters of the Communist Party of Japan are the center of the most vibrant grass-roots movement in the country. The party's ranks are swelling, it has 24,000 branch offices and more than a million people read its newspaper. Only one party - the one that runs the country - beats it at fundraising.

As Japan's economy withers,

communism is coming to life.

Dormant in the boom years and marginalized even as Japan more recently clawed its way out of recession, the party's litany of capitalist evils is now resonating deeply with many Japanese—especially the young - who are feeling the pain of an economic downturn that some say has reached depression dimensions.

While the Communist Party -

which is the fourth-largest party in parliament, but has only 16 of the total 722 seats - is not likely to take over anytime soon, it is making itself felt.

On college campuses, in particular, Karl Marx is popular again.

"I have never voted before, but I intend to vote communist in the next elections," said Suguru Yagi, a Tokyo college student.

## Bush makes first trip abroad as ex-president

**BOAO, China (AP)**—Former President George W. Bush cracked jokes about how he scoops up after his dog on neighborhood walks and then turned to more serious subjects like terrorism and the financial crisis Saturday during his first overseas trip since leaving office.

Bush - in China for the Boao Forum - also shared some of his most unusual moments with leaders, including the time he listened

to former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi sing "Hound Dog" while visiting Graceland mansion, home to the late Elvis Presley in Memphis, Tennessee.

The stories drew laughter and applause from the audience in a huge banquet hall at the forum, an annual conference where executives hobnob with global leaders at a resort on China's southern tropical island province of Hainan. Security was

tight and there were no protests.

Bush said after he left the White House and moved into his new home in Dallas, Texas, he decided to take his Scottish terrier Barney for a walk. To be a good neighbor, he said he carried a plastic bag so he could clean up his dog's droppings. The task seemed ironic to him, he said.

"I was picking up what I had been dodging for eight years," Bush said.

### ASIAN BRIEFS

#### Blasts reported in northwestern Pakistan

**PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)**—Two loud explosions on Sunday shook a northwest Pakistan militant stronghold that has been the frequent target of U.S. missile strikes, a local resident said. Haji Gul Zaman said he heard the blasts and saw plumes of smoke rising near Wana, the main city in South Waziristan tribal region. Trucks carrying Taliban fighters raced toward the scene, said Gul, who lives just outside Zari Noor, a village in the area. It was not immediately clear if anyone was killed or wounded. Pakistani news channels blamed American missiles for the blasts, but did not cite their sources. Officials could not immediately be reached to confirm the cause.

#### Sri Lanka health official says 28 civilians killed

**COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP)**—At least 28 civilians have been killed in two days of fighting as Sri Lankan troops try to push into a small "no-fire zone" where Tamil Tiger rebels have bunkered down for their final stand, a health official said Saturday. The rebels lost to government forces the de facto state they controlled for years in parts of the country's north and east and have retreated into a tiny slice of land that the government earlier declared a haven for civilians fleeing the fighting in this island's nation's 25-year civil war. There have been widespread international calls for a cease-fire to allow the more than 100,000 civilians trapped in the 7.7-square mile (20-square kilometers) zone to reach safety—but the government has rejected a

long-term cease-fire, saying it would only give the rebels time to regroup.

#### SKorea: 2 Koreas will hold talks this week

**SEOUL, South Korea (AP)**—South Korea says it has accepted North Korea's proposal for talks on a joint factory park, the first high-level dialogue between the two countries in a year. Unification Ministry spokeswoman Lee Jong-joo says officials of the two Koreas plan to meet in the border town of Kaesong on Tuesday to discuss the factory complex. The facility on the northern side of the border is the last major joint project between the rival Koreas and a key source of currency for the impoverished North's communist regime. The meeting comes amid rising tensions after the North launched a rocket on April 5.

#### 5 suspected militants killed in Afghanistan

**KABUL (AP)**—NATO-led forces and Afghan troops killed three suspected militants during a raid Saturday in central Afghanistan, where insurgent attacks have spiked this year, officials said. At least two other suspected militants died in an airstrike in the south. The joint force was targeting insurgent commanders in a village in Logar province. The three suspected militants were killed in a gunfight following a call for them to surrender, a NATO statement said. About 3,000 U.S. troops serving under the NATO-led command have been deployed in Logar and Wardak provinces in an attempt to clear the two major insurgent strongholds, which border Kabul.

# World

## Obama extends hands to Chavez, Ortega

**PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad (AP)**—President Barack Obama offered a spirit of cooperation to America's hemispheric neighbors at a summit Saturday, listening to complaints about past U.S. meddling and even reaching out to Venezuela's leftist leader.

While he worked to ease friction between the U.S. and their countries, Obama cautioned leaders at the Summit of the Americas to resist a temptation to blame all their problems on their behemoth neighbor to the north.

"I have a lot to learn and I very much look forward to listening and figuring out how we can work together more effectively," Obama said.

tively," Obama said.

Obama said he was ready to accept Cuban President Raul Castro's proposal of talks on issues once off-limits for Cuba, including political prisoners held by the communist government.

While praising America's initial effort to thaw relations with Havana, the leaders pushed the U.S. to go further and lift the 47-year-old U.S. trade embargo against Cuba.

To Latin American nations reeling from a sudden plunge in exports, Obama promised a new hemispheric growth fund, an initiative to increase Caribbean security and a partnership to develop alter-

native energy sources and fight global warming.

As the first full day of meetings began on the two-island nation of Trinidad and Tobago Saturday, Obama exchanged handshakes and pats on the back with Venezuela's Hugo Chavez, who once likened Obama's predecessor, President George W. Bush, to the devil.

In front of photographers, Chavez gave Obama a copy of "The Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent," a book by Eduardo Galeano that chronicles U.S. and European economic and political interference in the region.

## At least 70 hurt in Mexico train crash



Rescue workers carry an injured passenger out of a train after a collision in Tlanepantla, Mexico, Saturday, April 18, 2009. AP

**MEXICO CITY (AP)**—An official says at least 70 people have been injured in a commuter train crash on the outskirts of Mexico City.

Mexico State civil defense employee Heladio de la Cruz says many injured were being

treated early Sunday at several local hospitals but there was no immediate information on their condition. Emergency personnel were working to remove all the victims from the train cars.

Officials say one train apparently ran into another Sat-

urday on the recently inaugurated Suburban Railway in the State of Mexico, which borders Mexico City. Photos from the scene showed crumpled train cars still on the tracks.

The train service was launched in mid-2008.

## US 'deeply disappointed' as Iran convicts reporter

**TEHRAN, Iran (AP)**—Iran convicted an American journalist of spying for the United States and sentenced her to eight years in prison, her lawyer said Saturday, complicating the Obama administration's efforts to break a 30-year-old diplomatic deadlock with Tehran.

The White House said President Barack Obama was "deeply disappointed" by the conviction, while the journal-



Saberi

ist's father told a radio station his daughter was tricked into making in-

criminating statements by officials who told her they would free her if she did.

It was the first time Iran has

found an American journalist guilty of espionage—a crime that can carry the death penalty.

Roxana Saberi, a 31-year-old dual American-Iranian citizen, was arrested in late January and initially accused of working without press credentials. But earlier this month, an Iranian judge leveled a far more serious allegation, charging her with spying for the United States.

## Italian scientist, turning 100, still works

**ROME (AP)**—Rita Levi Montalcini, a Nobel Prize-winning scientist, said Saturday that even though she is about to turn 100, her mind is sharper than it was when she was 20.

Levi Montalcini, who also serves as a senator for life in Italy, celebrates her 100th birthday on Wednesday, and she spoke at a ceremony held in her honor by the European Brain

Research Institute.

She shared the 1986 Nobel Prize for Medicine with



Montalcini

American Stanley Cohen for discovering mechanisms that regulate the growth of cells

and organs.

"At 100, I have a mind that is superior—thanks to experience—than when I was 20," she told the party, complete with a large cake for her.

The Turin-born Levi Montalcini recounted how the anti-Jewish laws of the 1930s under Benito Mussolini's Fascist regime forced her to quit university and do research in an improvised laboratory in her bedroom at home.

## Health & Fitness

# As it reaches middle age, aerobics is still moving

By **DEBORAH NETBURN**  
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Today's gym goers can be found singing on their stationary bikes during Cycle Karaoke, shaking their butts at Yoga Booty Ballet, sweating through a high-energy yoga flow class and learning the dance moves to "Legally Blonde." They're moving in different ways with different rhythms, but they're all trying to get the heart rate up in an interesting, engaging way.

In short, they're doing aerobics.

More than 40 years after Dr. Kenneth Cooper released the book "Aerobics," the form of exercise hasn't died. It has morphed with the times, giving itself new names and shedding the leg warmers and the headbands.

Cooper, then a young Air Force physician, invented the word "aerobics" for his 1968 book of the same name—tacking an S onto the medical adjective "aerobic" as a way to describe the kind of exercise he was touting. In the book, he defined aerobic exercises as those that "demand oxygen without producing an intolerable oxygen debt, so that they can be sustained for a long period of time."

He didn't particularly like the word, and he didn't want it to be the title of his book. "The publisher thought we should call the book 'Aerobics.' I disagreed," he said recently from his office at the Cooper Institute in Texas where, at 77, he still sees patients, including former President George W. Bush. "People

can't pronounce it, they can't spell it, they won't remember it," he recalled contending. "But look what has happened in the past 40 years."

Americans now know—whether they choose to use such knowledge—that aerobic exercise, getting the heart working for sustained periods of time, is to their benefit. In the 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity per week for most adults. Doctors routinely encourage their patients to exercise aerobically to keep their heart healthy. And classes of all forms and stripes try to push people—if not to their limit—at least enough to make them sweat for extended periods.

The percentage of Americans working out aerobically increased steadily from 24 percent in 1968 (when Cooper's book came out) to 59 percent in 1984, according to Gallup Polls. (It since has shrunk: A 2006 survey by the National Center for Health Statistics found that 31 percent of Americans exercise aerobically.)

"The book had a huge impact," said Dr. Russell Pate, an exercise science professor at the University of South Carolina. "Part of that was because it was visionary and insightful, but part of it was that it came along at a time when the population was becoming aware that its inactivity was becoming problematic."



LOS ANGELES TIMES

Instructor Madonna Grimes, 32, leads a hip-hop dance class at Crunch gym in West Hollywood, Calif. Dr. Kenneth Cooper's book "Aerobics," touting a new strategy of sustained exercise, was first published in 1968.

Cooper wrote his book after spending a decade working with the Air Force, studying the effects of exercise and designing a fitness program for pilots and astronauts.

In the book he argues that aerobic exercise is the best way to condition the body—better than (then-popular) calisthenics, weight lifting or better anaerobic exercise such as sprints and drills. He wrote that aerobic exercise like jogging or swimming, done frequently and with enough duration, "improves the overall condition of the body especially its most important parts, the lungs, the heart, the blood vessels, the body tissue, building a bulwark

against many forms of illness and disease."

Before Cooper's book, aerobic exercise was the domain of professional athletes; average people were rarely encouraged to get their heart rates up.

"I remember times when the only people we ever studied were athletes because the only people exercising were athletes," said Walter Thompson, a professor in the department of kinesiology and health at Georgia State University.

For women, sweating was considered unladylike; for men over 40, it was considered dangerous.

"My colleagues back in the '50s and '60s were very much afraid of exercise in people over 40 years of age," Cooper said. "I would see titles in newspapers that would say, 'The streets are going to be dead of joggers if more Americans follow Cooper.'"

Of course, the opposite happened. "Ken Cooper was, if not the pioneer, one of the pioneers of therapeutic exercise," Thompson said.

After "Aerobics," Cooper published "The New Aerobics" in 1972 and worked with his wife to put out "Aerobics for Women" in 1977.

These were relatively straightforward exercise-for-exercise's-sake books. They emphasized the importance of physical activities such as jogging, cycling and skiing. The innovation that defined aerobics' appeal—setting heart-pounding movements to music—came from Jacki Sorenson, a former cheerleader at the University of California, Los Angeles.

In 1969, she took the 12-minute fitness test described in "Aerobics" and scored well, even though "all" she did was danced. Later that year, she contacted Cooper and showed him a 20-minute dance routine that got the heart racing and also would be more attractive to women at the time.

"I still remember that," Cooper said. "I said, 'Jacki, that's great. Go for it!'"

Aerobic dance was born. By the time Jane Fonda released her first aerobic workout videotape in 1982, the country had caught aerobics fever.

These days a panoply of aerobic workouts is available to the fitness minded—from masters swim clubs, to Tae-Bo, to yoga/cycling hybrids, to hula hooping, to boot camps, to old-fashioned aerobics dance classes billed as "retro."

"Work up a sweat with a touch of nostalgia in this heart-pumping, traditional aerobics class," reads the description of a "Retro-Robics" class on one health club's Web site. "This time around, legwarmers are optional!"

By **KATHLEEN MEGAN**  
(C) 2009, THE HARTFORD COURANT

It's 1 a.m. You have to get up at 6. You're exhausted, but you can't sleep. What do you do?

You may find yourself slurping a spoonful of NyQuil or taking a Tylenol PM. Is that the best approach?

It all depends on how often you are in this situation, experts say.

Lynelle Schneeberg, a psychologist and director of the behavioral sleep medicine program at Gaylord Hospital in Wallingford, Conn., says that "if you're talking short-term insomnia during a short-term stressful situation," then taking a pill can be OK. But "chronic insomnia, when you are talking six months or longer, is a different animal."

For many, worries about jobs and the economy have been interfering with sleep. Almost one-third of Americans say their sleep has been disturbed at least a few nights a week in the past month because of personal financial concerns, the U.S. economy or employment worries, according to a survey by

the National Sleep Foundation.

Taken once in a while, those over-the-counter medications might be just the push you need to shove off into dreamland, but there are downsides. For starters, the sedating effects caused by the antihistamine in such products as NyQuil and Tylenol PM may not end when you wake up. And if you take them frequently, they might even be associated with occasional memory problems.

Edward O'Malley, a sleep expert and owner of Optimal Sleep LLC in Easton, Conn., says that antihistamines can continue to affect people six to eight hours after ingestion.

Dr. Amarish Dave, a neurologist in Crystal Lake, Ill., says that many of these sedating medications can "slow cognitive performance." Whenever he sees patients complaining of not feeling "sharp mentally," he looks at what medications they have been using.

Taking sedatives can also cause problems for people with breath-



It's 1 a.m. You have to get up at 6. You're exhausted, but you can't sleep. What do you do?

ing disorders and occasionally can have cardiac effects in elderly people, O'Malley says.

Experts have varying opinions on herbal remedies. O'Malley says they may be preferable to over-the-counter sleeping medications, but he suggests that people use only synthetically made melatonin rather than any made from animal brain tissue.

Melatonin is the hormone

secreted when the body is naturally preparing itself for sleep. O'Malley says it is most appropriate when used to address jet lag.

Schneeberg tells patients about the "every third night" rule when they ask about taking medications that may enhance sleep, whether the over-the-counter variety or prescription medications such as Lunesta or Ambien.

The theory is that if you sleep poorly on Monday night, you probably will have a sound sleep on Tuesday night. But sometimes that doesn't happen partly because people lie awake consumed with worry. ... But if you know that on the third night, Wednesday night, you'll allow yourself to take a sleep medication, Schneeberg says, sometimes that's all you need to ease yourself to sleep on Tuesday night.

"If you know that every third night is a rescue night, it lowers your anxiety," she says. "You really will never get into too much trouble if you take it every third night."

If you take sleep-enhancing medications every night, you "can become psychologically and physically dependent on them," Schneeberg says, and even lose your ability to get to sleep without taking something.

In general, however, sleep experts agree that the best way to address sleep problems is through behavior changes. Sch-

neeberg teaches people how to behave when they can't sleep.

"They do all the wrong things with the right intentions," she says. "They lie in bed trying really hard to sleep. They will tell me, 'At least I'm resting,' but what they are doing instead: They are conditioning their bed to be a place associated with worry and frustration. ... We don't want bed to be associated with anything but drowsiness and sleep."

After 20 minutes of wakefulness, it's best to leave bed and do something quiet and relaxing, like reading, she says. It's best if this is done as near to the bedroom as possible without disturbing a partner. "Sometime the act of climbing the stairs wakes you up," she says.

Good sleep habits also involve going to bed and getting up at about the same time every day.

"The body loves routine," she says.

Other tips: A light snack before bedtime is OK, but not a heavy meal; exercise during the day to make you physically tired at night; avoid naps; and take whatever action you can to address your worries.

# Life & Style

## 'The Soloist's' accompanying theme: A newspaper requiem

By HANK STUEVER  
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

**LOS ANGELES**—Two new movies try to tell us that newspapers are vital not only to movie plots but to the community, if anyone still wants to hear it. One is "State of Play," a Washington thriller about power, murder and a ludicrous frenzy of journalistic melodrama that culminates with a triumphant rolling of the old presses. Viewers are asked to suspend disbelief in much the same way they've suspended home delivery.

Then there's "The Soloist," opening Friday, which has the benefit of being a true-ish story about a true story. You go in expecting an uplifting drama of a homeless man who loses and finds himself in music—and it's certainly there. But woven in is an elegiac story of the ongoing demise of the *Los Angeles Times*, which in recent years has cut its staff and coverage in half and whose owners spend a lot of time now in bankruptcy court. The presses also run in this movie, but they are more sonorously sad.

People who've seen "The Soloist" come out feeling happy for the schizophrenic homeless man on this city's notorious Skid Row. They also leave feeling sort of awful about the prospects for the reporter and newspaper that brought his story to light.

You've probably heard the story of "The Soloist," or know it from the movie trailer, or the best-selling book, or the New Yorker story, or the "60 Minutes" segment: A mentally ill homeless man named Nathaniel Ayers was playing a nearly stringless violin on the streets of downtown L.A. when columnist Steve Lopez found him in early 2005.

Lopez did what Lopez does for a living. After watching and trying to coherently interview Ayers a couple of times, he fact-checked a few of the more incredible details from Ayers' life and then wrote a fast and easily heartfelt column about the mysterious and sad "violin man," who'd once studied at Juilliard until madness claimed him. The column ran in the California section of the *Times*, where Lopez has worked since 2001. (He's also been a columnist for *Time* and the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.)

"I didn't see the reaction coming," Lopez, 55, says. "Even now, I look back and wonder what it was I didn't see in my own column. I knew instinctively there was something compelling in (Nathaniel's) life, but with me it's hit and run and on to the next column."

People's love for Lopez's story about Ayers has never gone away.

After the first column ran, readers sent Lopez more e-mail than he's ever received. One reader even sent Lopez a cello to replace Ayers's beaten violin. (Ayers had trained on the cello as a boy; he plays 10 instruments in all.) Lopez, terrified that Ayers would be assaulted on the streets if he was carrying around an expensive instrument, fell into a series of encounters and dramas with his curious subject that have more or less tethered him to Ayers' well-being.

The dilemmas, for Lopez, are many, even four years later. Should Ayers—who can be at once as charming and profound as he can be nasty and violent—be persuaded to take medications that might stabilize his personality? (So far, he has resisted.) Should he live in the sane world even if he finds better acoustics in traffic tunnels and more sublimity on Skid Row? How involved should Lopez be in Ayers' affairs? After several more columns, which resulted in reuniting Ayers with his sister (who lives in Georgia) and led to Ayers moving into a safe apartment, Lopez had to decide if Ayers, who is 58, was a source, or a friend, or a charity case, or all of the above.

Or more? By 2006, Lopez had signed a book contract to write about Ayers; he had a tight deadline to deliver a manuscript. At the same time, three Hollywood producers were vying for the movie rights to Lopez's unfinished book—which, in a tricky sense, are also the rights to Ayers' and Lopez's life stories. Lopez met with each of the producers and decided to sell the rights to Gary Foster and Russ Krasnoff, who, after a lunch meeting, wanted Lopez to give them a walking tour of Skid Row.

"Their eyes bugged out of their heads," the columnist says. "Back then, a Third World collapse is really what you would have seen down there—stark-raving mad, people injecting heroin, hundreds of people camped out on the street."

Oscar-nominee Susannah Grant (who wrote "Erin Brockovich") was brought in to write a script based on Lopez's original columns. Jamie Foxx was cast as Ayers and Robert Downey Jr. signed on to play Lopez.

But what about Ayers' say in all this? He also

made money in the movie deal; his sister oversees his business affairs. "But he has no interest in money, no need for money," Lopez says. "In some ways, it's the greatest peace a man can find. He has no bills, no driver's license, no phone, no watch. He wakes up and it's music. It's negotiating the madness and getting to a point where he can play his cello, violin, clarinet, French horn, viola, double bass, piano, whatever for the next 12 hours. There was no point (for Ayers) to do this for the money."

*“He has no interest in money, no need for money. In some ways, it's the greatest peace a man can find. He has no bills, no driver's license, no phone, no watch. He wakes up and it's music.”*



You've probably heard about "The Soloist," or know it from the movie trailer, or the bestselling book: A mentally ill homeless man named Nathaniel Ayers (shown in an April 2008 photo) was playing a nearly stringless violin on the streets of downtown L.A. when *Los Angeles Times* columnist Steve Lopez found him in early 2005. Woven in the movie is an elegiac story of the newspaper's ongoing demise.

Lopez, who files two columns a week for the *Times*, has a young daughter with his wife, Allison (and two older sons from his first marriage). Alongside juggling a book and movie deal, he also became Ayers' advocate, protector (usually the homeless center calls Lopez when Ayers is in the throes of a manic episode), official narrator, public liaison and press agent. They go to Dodgers games and to symphony concerts together at Disney Hall. Above any other commodifying of their story and relationship, Lopez considers Ayers his friend.

Both versions of "The Soloist" turned out different than planned.

With the book, Lopez's first draft included an extra 100 pages about the history of the treatment of mental illness; a look at two suicides in Lopez's family history; and quite a bit of rumination on the tumult Lopez was experiencing at work, as the *Times* suffered cut after demoralizing cut. His book editor in New York, Peternelle Van Arsdale, asked him to get rid of all that. "She said something like, 'I'm sorry to have to break this to you, but nobody cares about the death of the newspaper industry except people in the newspaper industry,'" Lopez recalls.

True except for among the creative classes in Hollywood, where there seems to be a growing despair about the ever-slimmer *L.A. Times*. Screenwriters and producers keep going online to wail about the paper's plight and reluctantly confess to canceling their decades-long subscriptions. Grant had this in mind as she wrote "The Soloist" screenplay. What Lopez had been asked to tone down in his book—the "death of print"—became an underlying theme in her version.

"It's important," she says. "Nathaniel's story is about being disconnected from society. And that's what we're seeing here. How are people connected to one another? Without the newspaper? With so little else that connects each of our stories together?" In one movie scene, Lopez writes a column on blood donations, and a young lab assistant inserts the needle as she tells him she never reads the paper.

Dreamworks and Paramount hired Joe Wright, the British film director fresh off "Atonement," to direct "The Soloist." Lopez specifically avoided reading drafts of the screenplay to concentrate on his book. If he had, he would have seen that while Wright and Grant stayed faithful to Ayers' character and story, the "Steve Lopez" character was getting an extreme makeover.

As played by Downey, this Lopez is hipper, slighter, a decade younger and divorced. (And what's more, his ex-wife, played by Catherine Keener, is his editor.)

"I came up with the idea they're both, Nathaniel and Steve, a soloist," Wright explains. "They both have difficulty connecting to other human beings, in different ways. It just made sense to make him divorced." (The real Lopez jokes that he might write a love letter to his wife for a column the weekend the movie comes out, to make things right.)

One thing "The Soloist" gets right is the life of a metro newspaper columnist. There's no crime to solve or parking garages in which to flee assassins. There's just a column to write. The crew filmed for several days in the *Times* newsroom, blocks from Skid Row. Wright says they looked for another location (and even considered using "State of Play's" leftover newsroom set in Culver City), but decided the real thing looked best.

Ayers, so far, seems to be managing celebrity-hood OK. He plays music, does his chores at the help center, has a girlfriend now and still lives in an apartment run by a local shelter. "The thing Nathaniel and I love most is going to a concert together," Lopez says. "And that's changed. Now we're 'The Soloist' guys, and people come up to us and want Nathaniel's autograph. So far, so good, but you never know what will set him off. I worry."

All along, Ayers had said he didn't want to see the movie. Schizophrenics are sometimes not the biggest fans of two-dimensional reality. But for a cast and crew screening in December, Paramount sent a swank bus to Skid Row to pick up the many folks who had cameo roles in the film. They went to the Arclight cinema in Hollywood. There was a party. Ayers wanted to go.

Lopez sat by his side in the theater. "I said to him, 'You don't have to do this,'" Lopez said. Some things would be upsetting, he said, but he wanted Ayers to know he was proud of him.

"He said, 'OK, Mr. Lopez, all right Mr. Lopez.'"

The lights went dark. Ayers kept his eyes shut for all 109 minutes of the film.

"He loved how it sounded," Lopez says.

# Madonna injured in fall from startled horse in NY

**NEW YORK (AP)** -- Madonna took a tumble while horseback riding in the Hamptons on Saturday when her mount was startled by photographers, and she suffered "minor injuries" and bruises, a spokeswoman said.

Paparazzi had "jumped out of the bushes" to photograph her, spokeswoman Liz Rosenberg said.

It's at least the second fall from

a horse in four years for Madonna, who recently turned 50.

The singer was treated at a Southampton hospital and was released, said Rosenberg, who wouldn't disclose more details on her condition.

Madonna, singer of such pop classics as "Like a Virgin" and "Material Girl," had been visiting friends in the Hamptons, a playground for the rich and

famous on the eastern end of Long Island.

She was thrown from a horse in England in the summer of 2005. She cracked three ribs and broke her collarbone and a hand in that accident.

She got back on a horse a couple of months later, when she was a guest the "Late Show with David Letterman" on CBS. She and the talk show's host rode

their horses outside his Manhattan studio. She said it was the first time since her fall that she had been back in the saddle.

"I have a bit of excitement tainted with fear," she said then before climbing on.

She also said she hadn't been back on a horse since that fall "because my record company is not very keen on the idea of me injuring myself."



AP  
In this Sunday, Feb. 22, 2009 file photo, Madonna arrives at the Vanity Fair Oscar party, in West Hollywood, Calif.

# An energized Paul McCartney opens Coachella fest

**INDIO, Calif. (AP)**—Energized by the desert air and memory of his late wife, a playful and passionate Paul McCartney riffed on "Foxy Lady," led an after-midnight "Hey Jude" singalong and dedicated songs to his former bandmates at the Coachella music festival

you've got President Obama. Yeah, you know we've come a long way."

Switching from serious to cheerily self-aware, he led call-and-response chants only to wave them off quickly as "messing around," and dismissed signs held by front-row

fans - including one that asked for his guitar pick.

"No! It's mine!" McCartney said. "Anyway, if I make a mistake, I can blame the signs."

There were mistakes. McCartney was proficient but sometimes out-of-sync with the four-man band backing him. But he clearly enjoyed himself, plowing through songs from his "Fireman" album, "Band on the

Run" from the Wings, and Fab Four favorites like "Back in the USSR," "Paperback Writer" and, for the finale, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band."

McCartney launched brightly into "Something" with only his voice and a ukulele he said was given to him by George Harrison, before his band mates and the crowd joined in.

The first day of the festival also featured Morrissey, Leonard Cohen, the Hold Steady, Franz Ferdinand and the Ting Tings. It drew a number of young Hollywood stars to this desert city southeast of Palm Springs.

Anne Hathaway was spotted in the VIP area wearing patterned harem pants and a cardigan, while Morrissey's set drew the attention of "Twilight" actor Robert Pattinson, wearing skinny cut-off jeans, and Kirsten Dunst in a short-sleeve mini-dress. Kate Bosworth, "Weird Al" Yankovic, Chloe Sevigny and Zoe Kravitz were also spotted in the VIP area.

Police reported 18 arrests for drug- and alcohol-related crimes, and fire officials took

three patrons to hospitals.

Las Vegas-based The Killers and M.I.A., a replacement for Amy Winehouse, headline a more youthful Saturday lineup. My Bloody Valentine and The Cure cap off Sunday night.

The recession has forced mu-

sic festivals nationwide to lower prices or downsize, and three-day, \$269 tickets to Coachella were available on a layaway plan. Single-day tickets were \$120 at the door. Organizers have not yet announced attendance or ticket sales.



AP  
Paul McCartney performs during his headlining set on the first day of the Coachella Valley Music & Arts Festival in Indio, Calif., Friday, April 17, 2009.

that kicked off Friday.

McCartney took off his black jacket five songs in and didn't put it back on for the next 29, strutting the stage in boots, black pants, a white shirt and suspenders that he tugged at wryly.

"It's going to be a good weekend, dear," he told the crowd of thousands gathered for the three-day festival, which erupted in cheers with the first chords of Beatles tunes like "Eleanor Rigby." It was McCartney's first appearance at a U.S. festival as a solo artist.

In the 2 1/2-hour set, including two encores, McCartney dedicated "Long and Winding Road" and "My Love Does It Good" to his late wife Linda, who died at the couple's ranch at Tucson, Ariz., 11 years earlier to the day.

"It's an emotional day for me. That's good, that's OK," he said, pounding his chest. "Lot of heart, lot of emotion."

Before a moving performance of "Blackbird," he noted that it had been written in response to the 60s civil rights movement. "Now

## In Celebration of Her New Life

# † Carmen Cabrera Acosta

**Born to life: January 03, 1933**  
**Born to Eternal Life :April 14, 2009**

### In her new life, she now joins:

**Husband** : †Francisco Naputi Acosta  
**Children** : †Asuncion C. Acosta & †Jesus C. Acosta  
**Parents** : †Ramon Taisague & †Concepcion Camacho Cabrera  
**Parents In-Law** : †Jesus Nenaishin & †Veronica Naputi Acosta  
**Brothers / Sisters & In-Laws:**  
†Antonio C. & †Carmen DLG. Cabrera  
†Maria C. & †Joaquin M. Seman  
†Jose C. & †Remedios S. Cabrera  
†Lucia C. Cabrera  
†Gregorio C. Cabrera  
†Vicente Sablan  
†Mariano Sablan  
†Nicolas T. Palacios

### Brother In-Laws / Sister In-Laws:

†Antonio N. Acosta  
†Soledad A. & †Jesus B. Blas  
†Calistro A. Crisostimo  
†Johnny San Agustin

### Her memories will forever live in the hearts of her:

**Children** : James & Jesusa R. Cabrera ( Jadine, Jermae, Jodie, Jasmine)  
Eduardo Cabrera ( Katherine, Edward Jr., Eric, Dorsha, Frankie, Taisha, Maybelline, Madelyn, Ed Michael, Bin)  
Donald & Priscilla Dlc. Cabrera ( Chad, Lionel, Amber, Cory )  
Elizabeth & Kenneth Blake ( Muhammad, Jameel, Fatimah, Khalid )

**Brother** : Dr. Calistro Camacho Cabrera  
**Sister** : Rosario Sablan Palacios

### Brother & Sister In-Laws:

Escolastica T. Cabrera, Antonia B. Sablan, Victoria F. Sablan  
Jose N. & Juana A. Acosta, Miguel & Dolores A. Agulto, Ana A. Crisostimo, Teresa A. San Agustin, Zenaída F. Acosta, Sam & Rosa A. Ares, Willie & Margarita A. Brown.

*She is additionally survived by numerous great grandchildren, nephews, nieces, cousins and friends.*

Nightly rosary is being prayed at Mt. Carmel Cathedral at 7:30 pm and mass of special intention is celebrated daily at 6:00am.

On Wednesday, April 22, 2009, her remains will be escorted from Nuestra Senora dela Paz Memorial Chapel at 7:30am to the Mt. Carmel Cathedral for viewing and last respects. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 11:00am, followed by Interment services at the Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

**With Great Appreciation**  
**Children & Family**  
**Dr. Calistro Camacho Cabrera**

By MICHAEL CIDONI  
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

# 'Housewives' cast gathers to bid Sheridan adieu

LOS ANGELES (AP)—For the cast and crew of "Desperate Housewives," it was a Saturday afternoon of warm hellos and bittersweet goodbyes, as they greeted an auditorium filled with cheering fans but also bid adieu to one of the show's leading original cast members.

Nicollette Sheridan, who plays Wisteria Lane's saucy "Edie," makes her final appearance as a series regular on the episode airing Sunday.

Co-star Teri Hatcher, whose sweet "Susan" was often at odds with Edie, got misty-eyed when recalling the filming of Sheridan's final episode.

"I made a scrapbook as my sort of parting gift, and it reminded me of how great those two characters were together," she said.

Excepting Sheridan, most of the "Housewives" principals participated in a panel discussion on the show as part of the two-week PaleyFest, an annual festival celebrating television held by The Paley Center for Media.

Sheridan's relationship with "Housewives" creator Marc Cherry has been described by some as contentious. Sheridan was recently quoted in "TV Guide" as saying she felt "Housewives" writers were unjustly ignoring Edie.

But cast mates Saturday said Sheridan's last days on the set were amiable and professional.

"Her attitude made them completely bearable," noted actor James Denton, whose plumber "Mike" was the long-



The cast of "Desperate Housewives" arrive at The Paley Center for Media's Paleyfest 09 in Los Angeles, Saturday, April 18, 2009. From left are : Doug Savant, Neal McDonough, James Denton, Teri Hatcher, Bob Daily, Eva Longoria, Marc Cherry, Dana Delaney, Brenda Strong, Kathryn Joosten, and Kyle McLachlan

time object of Edie's affections. "It could have been tough and sad, but she was so great.

Denton noted that Sheridan made a

point to thank the show's writers and cast, who were gathered at the table-read of the script for the first episode that she will not be in.

"She said, 'While you're all together, I'm here to say thank you for everything. You guys are great. You guys are awesome,'" Denton related.

"She walked out of the room and Felicity (Huffman) looked at me and said, 'classy,' and it sure was."

Veteran character actor Kathryn Joosten, a two-time Emmy winner for her portrayal of nosey neighbor "Mrs. McCluskey," said she would miss Sheridan.

"She was my playmate. We got to throw barbs at each other," Joosten said. "I won't have anybody to fight with."

Brenda Strong (narrator "Mary Alice") said she would miss Sheridan for personal reasons.

"There's a huge space in my heart for Nicollette, because she absolutely adores my son, and is so generous with him. I'm honored to have her in my life," Strong said.

Actor Neal McDonough (villain "Dave Williams") said that he would miss Sheridan probably more than anyone, although he's only been on the show for one season.

"Nic was like my sister," he said. "She was so close to my wife and my kids, and we had so many scenes together this year. That last scene we did was really tough, really emotional."

Hatcher said she thought that Sheridan seemed ready to leave to show.

"I think that character will be missed on the show, and I don't believe that character is replaceable," Hatcher said. "But I do believe there are some kind of arenas, like a neighborhood, where, as great as they are, people can come and go, and there can be something new and exciting that you didn't expect."

"Desperate Housewives," Sunday, April 19, 9 p.m. EST/PST on ABC.

## Jackie Chan: Chinese people need to be controlled

BOAO, China (AP)—Action star Jackie Chan said Saturday he's not sure if a free society is a good thing for China and that he's starting to think "we Chinese need to be controlled."

Chan's comments drew applause from a predominantly Chinese audience of business leaders in China's southern island province of Hainan.

The 55-year-old Hong Kong actor was participating in a panel at the annual Boao Forum when he was asked to discuss censorship and restrictions on filmmakers in China. He expanded his comments to include society.

"I'm not sure if it's good to have freedom or not," Chan said. "I'm really confused now. If you're too free, you're like the way Hong Kong is now. It's very chaotic. Taiwan is also chaotic."

Chan added: "I'm gradually begin-



In this Thursday, Feb. 26, 2009 file photo, Hong Kong action star Jackie Chan speaks to media during an event to promote the International Film Festival in Hong Kong.

ning to feel that we Chinese need to be controlled. If we're not being controlled, we'll just do what we want."

The kung fu star has not been a vocal supporter of the pro-democracy movement in his hometown of Hong Kong. Since the former British colony returned to Chinese rule in 1997, voters have not been allowed to directly elect their leader. Several massive street protests have been held to demand full democracy, but Beijing has repeatedly said Hong Kong isn't ready for it.

The theme at Saturday's panel discussion was "Tapping into Asia's Creative Industry Potential," and Chan had several opinions about innovation in China.

He said that early in his career, he lived in the shadow of the late martial arts star Bruce Lee. He said that during his first foray into Hollywood, he strug-

gled to establish his own identity, so he returned to Hong Kong. After spending 15 years building his reputation in Asia, Chan finally got rediscovered by Hollywood, he said.

Chan said the problem with Chinese youth is that "they like other people's things. They don't like their own things." Young people need to spend more time developing their own style, he added.

The action hero complained that Chinese goods still have too many quality problems. He became emotional when discussing contaminated milk powder that sickened tens of thousands of Chinese babies in the past year.

Speaking fast with his voice rising, Chan said, "If I need to buy a TV, I'll definitely buy a Japanese TV. A Chinese TV might explode."

## Jackie Chan's China comments prompt backlash

HONG KONG (AP)—Action movie star Jackie Chan questioned the need for freedom for Chinese people during a speech Saturday, prompting outrage from lawmakers in Taiwan and Hong Kong, who accused him of insulting his own race.

The 55-year-old star of "Rush Hour" said at a business forum in the southern Chinese island province Hainan on Saturday that a free society may not be beneficial for authoritarian mainland China.

"I'm not sure if it's good to have freedom or not," Chan said at the Boao Forum. "If you're too free, you're like the way Hong Kong is now. It's very chaotic. Taiwan is also chaotic."

Chan added, "I'm gradually begin-

ning to feel that we Chinese need to be controlled. If we're not being controlled, we'll just do what we want."

Chan's comments drew applause from his audience of mainly business leaders in Hainan on Saturday, but prompted fierce criticism from lawmakers in Taiwan and his hometown Hong Kong on Sunday.

Taiwan, which split with mainland China amid civil war in 1949, is a democratically self-ruled island.

Former British colony Hong Kong enjoys Western-style civil liberties and some democratic elections under Chinese rule. Half of its 60-member legislature is elected, with the other half picked by special interest groups. But Hong Kong's leader is

chosen by a panel stacked with Beijing loyalists.

"He's insulted the Chinese people. Chinese people aren't pets," pro-democracy Hong Kong legislator Leung Kwok-hung told The Associated Press in a phone interview. "Chinese society needs a democratic system to protect human rights and rule of law."

"His comments are racist. People around the world are running their own countries. Why can't Chinese do the same?" another Hong Kong lawmaker, Albert Ho, told the AP.

"He himself has enjoyed freedom and democracy and has reaped the economic benefits of capitalism. But he has yet to grasp the true meaning of freedom and democracy," Taiwanese

legislator Huang Wei-che said.

While Chan's comments were reported by the Hong Kong and Taiwanese news outlets, they were ignored by the mainland Chinese press.

Ho noted that Chan was a fierce critic of the Chinese military's brutal crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in June 1989, which killing at least hundreds, adding that he has apparently reversed his position to please the Chinese government.

But Chan has never been a consistent campaigner for democracy and has always been welcomed by the Chinese government. He performed at the opening and closing ceremonies for the Beijing Olympics last

year and took part in the Olympic torch relay.

The veteran action star, however, chose not to release his latest film in China.

The violent gangster thriller "Shinjuku Incident," in which Chan plays an illegal Chinese immigrant who becomes a hit man for Japanese gangsters, likely would have raised red flags among Chinese censors sensitive about negative portrayals of Chinese.

The film's director, Derek Yee, said, however, the main issue was its violent scenes. Yee said he didn't want to tone down the violence because it would hurt the movie.

Solon So, chief executive of Chan's company JC Group and his main spokesman, said Sunday the actor did not have further comment.

# Woman says she snooped at Spears' home for film

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—A woman arrested outside Britney Spears' home is a former "American Idol" hopeful who says she's making a paparazzi documentary.

Miranda Tozier-Robbins says she wanted to show the efforts paparazzi go through

and she chose Spears because it "might as well be someone I'm interested in."

Deputies arrested the 26-year-old Thursday after security guards caught her peeking into windows at the singer's Calabasas home, wearing camouflage and carrying camera gear.

The Fitchburg, Mass., native responded electronically to a series of questions from The Associated Press on Friday, and confirmed her identity in a phone message. She says she wasn't expecting Spears to be home, but would have tried to sell pictures of the singer if she got any.



AP

This image provided by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department shows Miranda Tozier-Robbins who was arrested Thursday April 16, 2009 on charges of trespassing outside Britney Spears' Calabasas, Calif., home.

## M.I.A. takes main stage of Coachella music fest

**INDIO, Calif. (AP)**—M.I.A. gave the main stage at Coachella her best shot. It just didn't work out.

After a strong start, a few hiccups, and a somewhat listless finale, the Grammy-nominated new mom declared at the end of her hour-long set in the desert that "next time I'm back in the tent."

"I want to be in the sweat," she said.

M.I.A. had performed twice in smaller tents at the music festival, in its tenth year and one of the nation's most prestigious.

She noted earlier, "I really don't know how to bring it on the main stage." And her live show staples - climbing on speakers, dancing body-to-body with the crowd - didn't quite fit the new digs. When she tried to bring some of the audience onstage Saturday night, security guards thwarted most fans.

M.I.A. ended up on a platform above the crowd performing "Bird Flu," and asked when it was over: "Can we get some order in the place? My baby's waiting." She gave birth to a son in February, a few days after the Grammys.

The Killers took the main stage to close the evening.

The Las Vegas-based group, who began with their most recent single "Human," appeared far more comfortable in the setting.

Wearing a black No Limit Records T-shirt, sneakers and jeans with Day-Glo green lining, M.I.A. performed songs from her two most recent albums and gave up the spotlight to Baltimore-based protege Rye Rye for a song. While she moved alongside Day-Glo-clad dancers for a lively opening number, she stood stiffly at other times behind a podium adorned with microphones as if at a news conference.

Roaming into the audience with help of a piggyback ride, she finished with crowd favorite "Paper Planes," lifted to hit status by appearances in "Pineapple Express" and "Slumdog Millionaire."

But the British-born, Sri-Lankan-bred rapper pushed back against Hollywood. She slyly referenced her status as Coachella replacement for Amy Winehouse, who canceled due to visa trouble, by singing "They tried to make me do the Oscars. I said no, no, no."

And, she noted, "I want to let you know that just 'cuz I did the Grammys, it doesn't

mean I've gone all sold out."

Though she wasn't embracing Hollywood, some of its regulars certainly wanted to be around for her. Zac Efron was seen ducking out of the fest's VIP area in the afternoon Saturday, and Paris Hilton posed for pictures with her new boyfriend during Thievery Corporation's popular main stage set just before M.I.A.

Also performing Saturday were Joss Stone, TV On The Radio, Fleet Foxes - who apologized to fans after suffering repeated technical problems - and Travis Barker and DJ AM, who had the dance tent crowd roaring at their drum-assisted remixes of pop hits.

Exact figures weren't released but crowds at the three-day festival appear to have more than doubled the approximate 75,000 population of this community southeast of Palm Springs. Police reported 17 arrests Saturday and fire officials said two people had been taken to hospitals.

Temperatures, climbing throughout the fest, were expected to hit the high 90s on Sunday, which features the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Public Enemy, My Bloody Valentine and the Cure.

## Security door safeguards woman working out alone

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



**DEAR ABBY:** I was the only person working out in the gym at my apartment complex the other evening when a man, presumably another resident, came to the front door. To enter, you must swipe your access card on the keypad.

He apparently did not have his access card with him and sat outside the door waiting for me to let him in. Because I was working on a cardio machine and trying to maintain my heart rate, I didn't want to interrupt my workout to open the door. He eventually tired of waiting and left.

Should I have stopped and let the person in the door? Or should he have gone back to get his access card?

CARDIO CARRIE IN GEORGIA

*Dear Abby*

**DEAR CARRIE:** While it would have been nice of you to let the man in, it could also have been dangerous because you were alone and the person was a stranger. The security door was put there for a reason, and I find it interesting that the man did not go after his entry card and return. The fact that he didn't suggests that he may not have been a resident as you assumed, and you may have dodged a bullet.

■■■

**DEAR ABBY:** I have been dating/engaged to a wonderful man for almost a year. He was recently deployed for a 14-month tour of duty in Iraq with the Marine Corps.

We planned to be married in August while he is home on R&R, but a few days ago he asked that we postpone the wedding until next February when he is stateside for good.

He was gung-ho about our nuptials until a few days ago, when he requested that we wait. I'm confused because all he talked about was getting married and now it's a sore subject.

MARINE'S GIRL

**DEAR MARINE'S GIRL:** Having never met or spoken to your fiancé, I can't explain what is going on in his head. However, active duty in a war zone is extremely stressful, and his change of attitude may be related to that.

It takes a strong woman to be married to a man in the military, so be patient, stay positive and let him know that you'll be there when he comes home. Do not pressure him for answers right now. Continue to be as supportive as you can. When he returns in August, you two can have a heart-to-heart talk about why he wanted to slow things down.

■■■

**DEAR ABBY:** We recently celebrated my stepdaughter's 40th birthday. After dinner I placed the birthday cake, along with the knife, cake server, plates and forks, in front of her. We sang "Happy Birthday," and she blew out the candles.

Shortly afterward, I realized she was not cutting and serving the cake, so I asked if she wanted her father or me to do it.

I was raised with the idea that the person whose birthday it is should serve the cake to those celebrating with her (or him). Now I have begun to wonder, what is the proper custom regarding who should cut and serve the birthday cake?

CURIOUS IN SAN FRANCISCO

**DEAR CURIOUS:** I'm not sure there is a rule of etiquette regarding who should serve the birthday cake. It's really up to the individuals involved, and the custom can vary from family to family. In your case, when you saw that your stepdaughter wasn't cutting the birthday cake, you did the right thing in asking her if she would like you to. That's what I would have done.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■■■

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

## Day after plunking woman, Bill Murray hacks away

**LUTZ, Fla. (AP)**—One day after she was plunked on the head by Bill Murray's wayward tee shot, Gayle DiMaggio had a request: a signed copy of his movie "Caddyshack."

The actor, meanwhile, was back on the course Saturday for the second round of the Outback Pro-Am. And the course marshals took no chances: They wore hard hats.

DiMaggio lives on the course where Murray hooked his shot far to the left of the No. 9 hole at TPC Tampa Bay. She was hit on the left temple Friday as she stood in her backyard to watch the first round. She never lost consciousness but needed stitches at a hospital.

DiMaggio, who has lived on the course for eight years, recounted her mishap and her encounter with Murray.

"He came over and laid down on the ground with me and he was very concerned, asking if I was OK," she said. "Once he knew I was OK and not seriously hurt, then he started joking with me, asking how many fingers he was holding up."

DiMaggio was at it again Saturday, watching the second round,

and was almost conked again. This time, former Tampa Bay Buccaneers linebacker Derrick Brooks nearly hit her. But when Murray was about to shoot, she took cover. DiMaggio stayed inside her screen enclosure until the actor's foursome teed off. Friends and family stood in her yard wearing hard hats.

Murray came to DiMaggio's backyard and asked her how she was feeling. DiMaggio said the only thing she wanted from the actor was his autograph on a copy of "Caddyshack," the rollicking golf comedy from 1980 in which Murray starred.

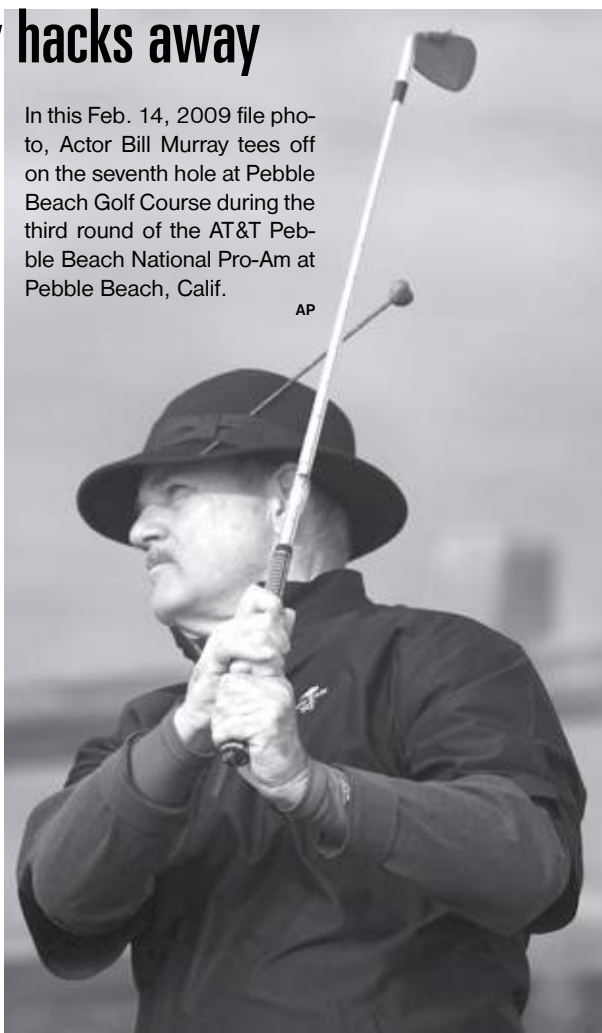
Earlier, a large crowd showed for Murray's 12:50 p.m. tee time. The 58-year-old comedian joked through most of his partners' tee shots. When Murray stepped up for his shot, the course marshals also donned hard hats and warned the crowd for incoming shots from the "Ghostbusters" star.

Murray laughed, and before teeing off told the crowd, "This one is for a little girl in a hospital."

His drive was a perfect draw down the fairway.

In this Feb. 14, 2009 file photo, Actor Bill Murray tees off on the seventh hole at Pebble Beach Golf Course during the third round of the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am at Pebble Beach, Calif.

AP





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**IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**

JOAQUIN TAISACAN QUITUGUA, Plaintiff, vs. FRANCISCO BLAS IGISAIAI and EDDY BLAS IGISAIAI, Defendants.

**CIVIL ACTION NO. 96-1249**

**NOTICE OF SALE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, pursuant to a Writ of Execution issued by the Court in this matter on March 6, 2009, I will sell, at public auction, to the highest bidder, on the terms and conditions set forth hereinbelow, all of the right, title, and interest of Defendants Eddy Blas Igisaiai in and to the following property: Lot No. 026 K 80, situated in Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands, containing an area of 895 square meters, more or less, as more particularly described on Drawing/Cadastral Plat No. 026 K 08 dated September 24, 1993, Commonwealth Recorder's File No. 93-3500, the description therein being incorporated herein by reference.

Date, Time, and Place of Sale. The sale will be held on Friday, May 1, 2009, at the hour of 1:30 p.m., at the Law Offices of Michael A. White, Esq., LLC, Joeten Center, Susupe, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands. The sale will be open to the general public.

Terms and Conditions of Sale. The Terms and Conditions of Sale may be obtained from the undersigned, either prior to or at the sale. These terms and conditions shall govern the conduct of the sale.

DATED, this 17th day of March, 2009.

/s/ MICHAEL A. WHITE  
Auctioneer

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# Rose blooms: Bulls beat Celtics 105-103 in OT



**BOSTON (AP)**—Derrick Rose scored 36 points in his playoff debut and helped the Chicago Bulls do something not even Michael Jordan could: beat the Boston Celtics in the postseason.

Rose had 11 assists to go with his career high in points, and Tyrus Thomas made a jumper from the corner with 51 seconds left in overtime to lead the Bulls to a 105-103 victory over the defending NBA champions in Game 1 of their best-of-seven first-round series.

Rajon Rondo scored 29 points with nine rebounds and seven assists for Boston, which was without Kevin Garnett and without much help from the rest of the Big Three, either.

Paul Pierce scored 23 points on 8-of-21 shooting, but missed the potential game-winning free throw at the end of regulation and had a potential game-tying basket blocked with 3.7 seconds left in overtime. Ray Allen, who scored four points on 1-for-12 shooting, had a chance to send it into a second overtime but his jumper from the right side bounced off the back of the rim.

Game 2 is Monday, the anniversary of the 1986 playoff game when Jordan scored 63 points against Boston—in a Bulls loss. In fact, Chicago had not beaten the Celtics in 10 postseason games since the Chicago Stags beat the Celtics in the 1948 Basketball Association of America quarterfinals.

Too hurt to play and too frustrated to watch, Garnett took refuge in the locker room after the first half while his teammates rallied from an 11-point deficit. Rondo hit a short jumper over Joakim Noah in the lane to give the Celtics a 96-95 lead, but Rose put Chicago ahead on two free throws with 9.4 seconds left in regulation.

Noah fouled Pierce with 2.6 seconds left, but after tying it 97-all with the first free throw the Celtics captain missed the second and the game went into overtime.

Thomas scored six of Chicago's eight points in the overtime and finished with



Chicago Bulls guard Derrick Rose (1) drives to the hoop against the defensive pressure of Boston Celtics guard Ray Allen (20) during the second half of their first round NBA playoff basketball game in Boston, Saturday, April 18, 2009.

16 points. Noah, who was also making his postseason debut, scored 11 with 17 rebounds for the Bulls.

Garnett injured his right knee on Feb. 19 and played just 66 minutes, 18 seconds over the last two months of the regular season as the Celtics tried to get

him back in shape for the playoffs. But the team kept pushing back the date of his return - from the final three games, to the last two and then to one before coach Doc Rivers shocked everyone on Thursday when he announced that Garnett wouldn't be back in time for

Saturday's playoff opener and probably not at all.

Garnett hasn't traveled with the team or been on the bench during his recovery, but Rivers and the players all said that it would be vital to have him out there to cheer them on. That lasted for 24 minutes of fist-pumping, ear-chewing and butt-slapping before Garnett decided he couldn't take it any more.

He missed Rose hitting a hanging jumper in the lane to give the Bulls a 55-44 lead before Boston cut the lead to four points and, with an 8-0 run later in the third, take a 68-67 lead on Rondo's 3-pointer with four minutes left in the quarter.

With the loss at home, the Celtics showed they are in for a long road—and probably a short playoffs—without Garnett. As the No. 2 seed in the East, a team that has two All-Stars and won 62 games—Boston was expected to advance to the conference finals and a potential matchup with Cleveland.

On the other hand, the eighth-seeded Atlanta Hawks took the Celtics to seven games in the first round last year, and that proved to be a mere speed bump en route to their unprecedented 17th NBA title.

## Cavaliers 102, Pistons 84

At Cleveland, "One Goal" is the Cleveland Cavaliers' new playoff theme. On Saturday, one field goal is about all they needed.

LeBron James banked in a 3-pointer at the halftime horn and Cleveland's superstar finished with 38 points, eight rebounds and seven assists as the Cavaliers embarked on their quest for a first NBA championship with a 102-84 win over the Detroit Pistons in Game 1.

James' 41-foot runner stunned the Pis-

tons and gave Cleveland, the league's most dominant team—home or away—during the regular season, a 12-point halftime lead. The Cavaliers held off one second-half push by Detroit while James was on the bench and closed out the Pistons, who will try to even the best-of-seven series in Game 2 on Tuesday night.

To do that, Detroit will have to devise something to slow James, who had his way for 41 minutes.

Joe Smith scored 13 points and Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 12 and 10 rebounds for Cleveland.

Rodney Stuckey scored 20 and Richard Hamilton 15 for the Pistons, who came in as a No. 8 seed.

## Mavericks 105, Spurs 97

At San Antonio, relax now, Dallas Mavericks: the playoff road drought is over.

Getting a postseason road victory for the first time since their NBA finals run in 2006, the Mavericks rode Josh Howard's 25 points and a clutch fourth quarter to start the playoffs with a 105-97 win over the San Antonio Spurs.

The sixth-seeded Mavericks, who had lost nine consecutive playoff road games, took a big Game 1 win over their Texas rivals in typically tough San Antonio. It was just the fourth home playoff loss since 2007 for the Spurs.

Tim Duncan scored 27 points, and Tony Parker had 24 for the Spurs.

## Rockets 108, Trail Blazers 81

At Portland, Ore., Yao Ming scored 24 points, all in the first half, and Houston spoiled Portland's back-in-the-playoffs euphoria.

Yao, who also had nine rebounds, hit all nine of his attempts from the field and all six of his free throws. He did not attempt a shot in the second half and sat for all of the fourth quarter.

Aaron Brooks added 27 points for the Rockets, who haven't advanced out of the first round of the playoffs since 1997. Brandon Roy had 21 points for the Blazers in their first playoff appearance since 2003.

# Hawks, Heat can appreciate playoffs more than most

**ATLANTA (AP)**—Every team relishes a trip to the NBA playoffs. Is there any team that appreciates it more than the Atlanta Hawks?

Well, maybe. How about the Miami Heat?

Both teams experienced life at the bottom of the league in the not-so distant past, which makes them especially grateful to still be playing at this time of year.

"I savor every moment of it," Hawks forward Josh Smith said. "You're more appreciative going from the bottom to the top than you are going from the top to the bottom."

Try telling that to Miami.

The Heat reached the pinnacle in 2006, winning its first NBA title with a team led by Shaquille O'Neal and Dwyane Wade. Just two seasons later, with Wade battling injuries and O'Neal having been dealt to Phoenix, Miami plummeted all the way to the bottom of the standings with a 15-67 record.

It was an awful experience, but one that taught a valuable lesson about the fleeting nature of championships. No one wants to forget what happened, even those who were fortunate enough to be playing somewhere else last season.

"All season long, those guys, we've felt their pain," rookie forward Michael Beasley said. "We weren't here, but we know what they went through."

No one was more motivated than Wade. He returned from two injury plagued seasons with a vengeance, leading the league in scoring (30.2 a game) and pushing himself into MVP contention—all for the shot at another ring.

"The regular season, it's a warm up to this," Wade said. "The lights are brighter. I feel it already. I enjoy these moments. Our crowd's going to be rocking when we get back to Miami. Their crowd's going to be rocking in Atlanta. This is what we play for."

In contrast to Miami's rapid up-and-down-and-back-up-again journey, the Hawks took a much more tortuous trip to this best-of-seven series, which begins Sunday night in Atlanta.

The franchise actually went off course a full decade ago when a perennial postseason team decided to transform itself with youth and speed. Ohhhh, what a mess of things they made. The trade for Isaiah Rider is a good starting point for how NOT to rebuild a team. By 2004-05, the Hawks

were just a step above the D-League, winning only 13 games in coach Mike Woodson's first season.

"I knew we would eventually turn the corner, but it takes time," Woodson said. "I've been in this 27 years. If you thought we should have been in the playoffs two or three years ago, you're crazy, you're out of your mind. No young team in the history of this game has ever done that."

Indeed, there were times when the Hawks seemed to be standing still, but they were really making progress all along. They drafted Smith, Marvin Williams and Al Horford. They signed Joe Johnson. They rounded out the starting five by trading for Mike Bibby. On the court, the wins improved from 13 to 26 to 30 to 37 to this year's 47-35 mark, Atlanta's first winning season since 1999.

"It means a lot to me," said Smith, one of the holdovers from the worst season in franchise history. "To go from 13 wins to 47 wins is unbelievable."

The Hawks actually got a valuable sampling of playoff basketball a year ago, when they broke the NBA's longest active postseason drought, albeit with a record eight games below .500. No one gave them much of a chance

in the opening round against eventual NBA champion Boston, but they took the Celtics to the limit.

Three wins at home showed the Hawks they were capable of hanging with the NBA's elite. Four blowout losses in Boston showed them just how far they had to go.

The season ended with a dismal 99-65 loss in Game 7.

"That definitely left a sour taste in all our mouths," Smith said. "No one played well that game. We want to write a different story this year. We want to end on a positive note. We're not going to be satisfied just getting out of the first round. We want to try to reach our goal, to one day bring an NBA title to Atlanta."

Coming into this season, Woodson talked over and over about the importance of having home-court advantage to start the playoffs. Atlanta reached that goal as the best team in the Eastern Conference beyond the Cleveland-Boston-Orlando power triumvirate, which ran away from everyone else.

"I hope like hell there's a carry-over from last year's run," Woodson said. "That taught us how to play playoff basketball. When we to Boston, we

had no clue. That's why the games were so lopsided. Then we came home and won Game 3. We grew up awfully fast and were able to make a series out of it."

While much of the focus in this series will be on the Wade-vs.-Johnson matchup, there's always room for others to step up.

Beasley could play a huge role for Miami off the bench, giving the Heat scoring punch when Wade is not on the court. The rookie was the team's second-leader scorer at 13.9 points a game.

For the Hawks, keep an eye on much-traveled Flip Murray, who finally seems to have found a home in Atlanta. The combo guard averaged 12.2 points filling in for both Johnson and Bibby, providing the sort of instant offense the Hawks lacked a year ago from their reserves.

"We would not be in this position without Flip," Williams said.

Williams also played a key role before a back injury sidelined him for 16 games. He returned for the final week of the regular season and will be in the starting lineup Sunday night.

"That's 14 points and six or seven rebounds a game," Woodson said. "It's good to have him back."

# Mistake-free Gay takes 3-shot lead



**HILTON  
HEAD  
ISLAND,  
S.C.**

(AP)—Brian Gay is a round away from his second career victory—and from validating his place among PGA Tour winners.

Gay shot a 4-under 67 on Saturday and grabbed a three-stroke lead over Tim Wilkinson through 54 holes in the Verizon Heritage.

The former two-time South-eastern Conference champion at Florida already owns a tour title. But it was at the 2008 Mayakoba Golf Classic in Mexico, when most of the golf world was watching the bigger names at the World Golf Championships Match Play event.

In all, 2008 was a career-making year for Gay: He won a personal best of more than \$2.2 million, made 20 cuts and had 12 top-25 finishes.

And while most of tour stars aren't at Harbour Town Golf Links after last week's Masters, Gay understands no one would poke holes in this potential victory.

"Who else is playing doesn't really matter," Gay said. "I think it will be validation of winning last year. I did it once and I'll do it again."

Especially if Gay plays as steadily as he has so far. He has made one bogey in 54 holes, while driving it straight and true on the course's narrow, tree-lined fairways.

"Brian Gay is a fine player," said Lee Janzen, the two-time U.S. Open winner. "He doesn't get in trouble off the tee and he's a really good putter. I imagine if he continues to play that kind of steady golf, it will take a great round to catch him."

Wilkinson, a lefty from New Zealand seeking his first tour victory, finished with a 65, tied for the low third-round score.

Janzen hasn't won on tour since the second of his U.S. Open victories in 1998. He had two late birdies for a 69 that kept him in third.

Todd Hamilton, the 2004 British Open champion, was next, one shot further back af-

ter his 72.

Gay moved into the lead Friday with five straight birdies on the front nine. He kept it with his mistake free-play.

Entering with a one-shot lead, Gay's round got going with a two-putt birdie on the par-5 fifth hole. He extended things a hole later, rolling in a testy, sloping 10-footer. Gay's final birdie came on the par-5 15th with a nifty 20-foot putt.

He had consecutive birdies on the fifth and sixth holes to move to 11 under.

Wilkinson began the day

way through the Lowcountry course. He opened with a bogey, then made eagle a hole later. Two straight bogeys dropped him back on the front nine. But consecutive birdies on the 16th and 17th holes got him back in the game.

PGA Tour folk hero Boo Weekley was hoping for his third consecutive win at Harbour Town. He'll need a record-setting final round to make that happen after his 70 dropped him 11 shots behind Gay.

Gay said he took a five-shot



Brian Gay watches his birdie putt on the 15th green during the third round of the 2009 Verizon Heritage at the Harbour Town Golf Links on Saturday, April 18, 2009 in Hilton Head Island, S.C.

five shots behind, but used four consecutive birdies to close his front nine and jump up the leaderboard.

Wilkinson tied for second in last year's Valero Texas Open and won more than \$1.1 million in his first tour season.

This year hadn't gone as well so far, with Wilkinson missing four cuts in his eight events. His best finish was a tie for 38th at Mayakoba.

Harbour Town is much more to Wilkinson's liking.

"A course like this where you have to position your ball and things like that, it suits me a lot better," Wilkinson said.

Janzen scrambled his

lead into his last round in Mexico, but was far from comfortable. He worried about maintaining his margin and wound up losing some aggressiveness in his game.

"It was tough just trying to make par, you know, because I wasn't shooting at the flags and I had a bunch of 30-footers trying to two putt," Gay recalled. "It's not that easy."

He expects to hold his composure much better after his latest third-round lead.

"I think it can only help going out and playing solid today and coming out tomorrow and see if I can go out and do the same thing tomorrow."

## Indians' 14-run 2nd dooms Yanks, 22-4



NEW YORK (AP)—The Cleveland Indians set the bar for Yankee Stadium's new record book Saturday, scoring 14 runs in the second inning of a 22-4 victory.

Asdrubal Cabrera hit a grand slam and an RBI single in the second as the Indians chased struggling starter Chien-Ming Wang (0-3) and set several marks that could stand for a while at New York's swanky new home.

Mark DeRosa and Shin Soo-Choo each hit a three-run homer, Travis Hafner, Grady Sizemore and Victor Martinez had solo shots and manager Eric Wedge earned his 500th victory.

It was the most runs for the Indians since they beat New York 22-0 on Aug. 31, 2004, at the old Yankee Stadium. The 22 runs also tied the Yankees' record for most allowed in a home game.

Fausto Carmona (1-2) was the beneficiary of the Indians' big day at the plate, working six innings in his first victory of the season. He allowed four runs and six hits.

### Tigers 2, Mariners 0

At Seattle, Edwin Jackson baffled the Mariners again, allowing five hits while working into the eighth inning for Detroit.

Jackson (1-0), who beat the Mariners twice last season and has a career ERA of 0.40 against them, struck out six and walked one in 7 2-3 innings.

He outpitched Seattle's Erik Bedard (1-1), who allowed two runs and seven hits in six innings. He struck out eight in his first start at Safeco since he beat Detroit on July 4.

### Blue Jays 4, Athletics 2

At Toronto, Lyle Overbay hit a two-out, two-run homer off Dan Giese in the 12th inning for Toronto.

After a two-out walk to Jose Bautista, Overbay hit a towering drive to center off Giese (0-1), who was called up from Triple-A earlier in the day.

Right-hander Jason Frasor (2-0) got two outs for the win for Toronto. Blue Jays starter Brian Tallet gave up two runs—one earned—and four hits in 5 1-3 innings. He walked one and struck out one.

### White Sox 8, Rays 3

At St. Petersburg, Fla., Paul Konerko homered and drove in three runs, Mark Buehrle pitched effectively into the seventh inning for Chicago.

Buehrle (2-0) gave up eight hits, three walks and struck out five in 6 2-3 innings.

Carlos Quentin also homered for Chicago, which has won five of seven.

Tampa Bay left-hander Scott Kazmir (2-1) failed in his bid to open the season with three straight wins, giving up six runs and five hits in four-plus

### Twins 9, Angels 2

At Minneapolis, Jason Kubel had his second consecutive four-hit game and Minnesota cruised to a victory.

Kubel's two-run double off Kevin Jepsen (0-2) was the big hit of Minnesota's five-run fifth. He also scored three runs a night after finishing off his cycle with a go-ahead grand slam in Minnesota's 11-9 victory on Friday.

### Red Sox 6, Orioles 4

At Boston, Kevin Youkilis fell a triple short of the cycle and drove in four runs for Boston.

Youkilis went 4-for-5 with a three-run homer and two doubles as the Red Sox won their third straight after starting 2-6. Baltimore dropped its third consecutive game following a 6-2 start.

Mike Lowell had a pair of hits and an RBI for Boston.

Youkilis hit a three-run drive into the seats above the Green Monster off starter Adam Eaton (0-2) to put Boston ahead 4-0.

### Royals 2, Rangers 0

At Arlington, Texas, Zack Greinke did not allow a run for his third straight start, pitching a seven-hitter for his first career shutout.

Greinke (3-0) prevailed in a matchup of aces who started the day with the two lowest ERAs in the AL—Greinke at 0.00 and Texas' Kevin Mill-

wood at 0.64.

Greinke has thrown 34 consecutive scoreless innings. He struck out a season-high 10 and didn't issue a walk in his fourth career complete game in 106 starts.

### Mets 1, Brewers 0

At New York, Johan Santana looked perfectly at home in a ballpark built with him in mind.

The two-time Cy Young Award winner breezed through seven innings in his first start at Citi Field, and the New York Mets took advantage of a key error to scratch out the only run they needed in a victory over the Milwaukee Brewers.

A hard-luck loser so often his first season-plus in New York, Santana (2-1) allowed five hits and struck out seven without issuing a walk. He never allowed a Brewers baserunner past first.

### Padres 8, Phillies 5

At Philadelphia, Brad Lidge blew his first save in 54 opportunities, allowing four runs, including a three-run homer to Kevin Kouzmanoff, and San Diego beat Philadelphia.

Lidge (0-1) was a perfect 48-for-48, including the playoffs, in save chances last year in his first season with the Phillies. He hadn't blown a save opportunity since Sept. 23, 2007, when he was with the Astros.

### Marlins 9, Nationals 6, 11 innings

At Washington, Jeremy Hermida hit a three-run homer in the 11th inning after tying it with a two-run shot in the ninth, and Florida beat the Nationals for their sixth straight win.

Hermida, whose two-run homer tied it at 6 with two outs in the ninth, hit a 1-2 pitch from Wil Luedeza into the right-center field stands for the lead.

Kiko Calero (1-0), Florida's fifth pitcher, worked 1 1-3 scoreless innings for the win.

### Pirates 10, Braves 0

At Pittsburgh, Craig Monroe hit a pair of three-run homers and Ian Snell allowed four hits in seven-plus innings, lifting the Pirates to their second consecutive shutout of the Braves.

Monroe homered off Atlanta starter Jo-Jo Reyes (0-1) with two outs in the sixth inning and off reliever Buddy Carlyle with two outs in the seventh.

Snell (1-2) walked three, struck out three and benefited from three double plays. The right-hander was replaced by Sean Burnett after walking Martin Prado to lead off the eighth.

### Dodgers 9, Rockies 5

At Los Angeles, Manny Ramirez hit his first two home runs of the season—and dropped a flyball for his first error—and Andre Ethier also homered twice as the Dodgers extended their winning streak to seven games.

Ethier drove in four runs while batting second for the first time this season.

Chad Billingsley (3-0) allowed three runs and four hits over six innings with six strikeouts and three walks.

### Cubs 7, Cardinals 5, 11 innings

At Chicago, Aramis Ramirez hit a game-winning two-run homer in the 11th inning and Derrek Lee hit a two-run double to lead in a win for the Cubs.

Dennys Reyes (0-1) walked leadoff hitter Alfonso Soriano in the 11th inning, then Kosuke Fukudome bunted into a fielder's choice.

With two outs, Ramirez hit a 1-0 pitch from Reyes into the left-center bleachers to win it with his third homer of the season.

### Astros 7, Reds 0

At Houston, Wandy Rodriguez struck out 10 in seven innings and Geoff Blum drove in three runs for Houston.

Rodriguez (1-1) allowed only two hits and matched a career high for strikeouts.

Chris Sampson and Jeff Fulchino each pitched a hitless inning to complete the combined two-hitter and Houston's first shutout of the season.



# The Week in Sports

## XTERRA Saipan is scene stealer of the week



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR

Participants in the 2009 XTERRA Saipan Championship head to the water at Micro Beach for the swim leg.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

MBA's Seong Bin Lee, 22, tries to tap the ball away from the SIS Geckos' Sung Jae Cho during their game in the COPPSA caging last week at the MBA court in Dandan.

By **ROSELYN B. MONROYO**  
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REPORTER

**T**itle games in basketball and volleyball and other local competitions were relegated to sidelines last week, making way for the biggest weekend event in the region—the 2009 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

Dubbed as the Crown Jewel of XTERRA Global Tour, XTERRA Saipan featured top caliber professional triathletes and several local prides.

The list included Switzerland's Renata Bucher, who notched her fifth win in a row in the championship course. In the men's division, Sam Gardner of the United Kingdom defeated eight other pros, including 2008 champion Andrew Noble of Australia.

Saipan's Kieran Daly and Heather Kennedy topped the men's and women's XTERRA Sport divisions, as their familiarity with the course lifted them to easy victories.

More than 100 participants accepted the challenge of XTERRA Championship and XTERRA Sport and although some experienced difficulties and accidents during the races, still they enjoyed the journey and hoped to do it, again next year.

Two basketball leagues may not be as big as the 2009 XTERRA Saipan Championship, but still they are worth mentioning.

In the 2009 Budweiser Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Invitational Basketball League, Hyatt Regency Saipan nailed had an easy title win, clobbering Aqua Resort Club in the finals, 100-75, Monday night



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR

Eventual women's champion Renata Bucher in the bike portion of the XTERRA Saipan Championship.



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR

United Kingdom's Sam Gardner, center, raises his arm in triumph after ruling the 2009 XTERRA Saipan Championship. Also in the photo are runner-up Mike Vine, left, and third placer Sasha Wingerfeld.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Sixers' Joseph White is double-teamed by the Saints' Luizi Reyes, right, and Marvin Rabauliman during their title game in the RBC Easter caging Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Docomo's Mark Wallace goes for a jump hook against two OI'Aces defenders during their title game in the Budweiser caging Friday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

Players and supporters of Hyatt Regency Saipan celebrate as they receive the perpetual and champion trophy from Club TDHC president Noel Sabordo, standing fifth from right, moments after hammering out a 100-75 victory over Aqua Resort in the finals of the Inaugural Budweiser Tinian Dynasty Invitational Inter-Hotel Basketball League.



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

at the Tinian Municipal Gymnasium.

Also taking home a basketball championship was Docomo Pacific, which prevailed over OI'Aces, 88-80, in the title match in the 2009 BANMI/Budweiser Basketball League Friday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.

At the Marianas High School Gymnasium, Rollers Basketball Club hosted the 2009 RBC Easter Invitational Basketball Tournament.

Guam's Barrigada Crusaders topped the 14-and-under and 17-and-under divisions, while the Chalan Kanoa Saints won the 20-and-under title.

In the 2nd Annual Youth Spring Break Volleyball Festival at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium, four teams were crowned champions in their respective age groups.

Vacos and Powerpuff won the boys and girls 18-and-under division, while Whispering Palms and Dandan Elementary School ruled the 14-and-under and

12-and-under divisions, respectively.

Action in other leagues and tournaments on Saipan continued last week.

The 2009 IT&E Badminton Doubles Tournament is nearing its completion with title matches set yesterday, while the 2008-2009 Inter-Government/Business Slow-pitch Softball League had started its playoff round.

The 2009 Budweiser Saipan Major League and the Saipan Little League Baseball continued playing their regular season games. The 2009 Coalition of Private Schools on Saipan Basketball League and the 2009 NMIFA Spring Youth Football League are also on the same stage.

A burglary incident at the Ada Gym spoiled what could have been a perfect week for Saipan's sports community. A new laptop was stolen, while the trophy case at the main entrance of the gym was broken.



## XTERRA Saipan is scene stealer of the week

Titles games in basketball and volleyball and other local competitions were relegated to sidelines last week, making way for the biggest weekend event on island—the 2009 XTERRA Saipan Championship.

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# Saipan Tribune Sports

## Rose Blooms: Bulls beat Celtics 105-103 in OT

Derrick Rose scored 36 points in his play-off debut and helped the Chicago Bulls do something not even Michael Jordan could: beat the Boston Celtics in the postseason.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

# Record finish for Bucher, Gardner

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER

United Kingdom's Sam Gardner and Switzerland's Renata Bucher cruised to record-breaking finishes despite Saturday's scorching heat in the 8th Annual XTERRA Saipan Championship.

Gardner touched the tape at the American Memorial Park with the clock reading at two hours, 34 minutes, and 32 seconds to finish first overall.

The Surrey native surpassed the time of 2008 winner Andrew Noble (2:46:51) of Australia. Gardner also broke his own mark (2:37:04) when he first joined XTERRA Saipan in 2007.

Gardner was seventh in the 1-kilometer swim leg with his time of 20:20, first in the 30-km bike portion (1:18:14) and second in the 10-km run part (54:17).

### RELATED NEWS

Gardner lauds high standard of XTERRA Saipan

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men's division, including inaugural XTERRA Saipan winner Mike Vine of Canada and Noble of Australia.

See RECORD on Page 26



Gardner



Bucher

"It was very hot, but I had a fantastic race. The course was dry, so I had less difficulty doing the bike and run legs," Garner said.

The U.K. triathlete, who also won Guam XTERRA a few weeks ago, defeated eight other pros in the

### TALES FROM THE TRAIL

## Heart of champions, spirit of sportsmanship

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.  
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REPORTER

Aside from winning and surviving the tricky if not perilous descent on the slopes of Mt. Tapochao, there's still a lot of tales from the trail of the just concluded XTERRA Saipan Championship.

Julie Dibens of the United Kingdom and Saipan-based Japanese triathlete Mieko Carey crashed their bikes and were injured but they showed the spirit of true champions by not giving up and finished the race in pain.

Janet King, Jim McConnel, and Makoto Shimamoto also displayed sportsmanship in its purest sense.

Coming out of the waters of Micro Beach and first to complete the swim, Dibens was on her way to a runaway victory until she miscalculated one of the most difficult portions of the bike trail in Chinatown.

See HEART on Page 26



Two-time world champion Julie Dibens of the United Kingdom is shown here negotiating the jungle trail in the descent down Mt. Tapochao moments before the crash that ultimately caused her the 8th Annual XTERRA Saipan Championship.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

## Pangelinan leads SML in batting

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.  
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REPORTER



Mike Pangelinan of the Falcons leads the ongoing 2009 Budweiser

Saipan Major League in batting average based on 18 or more at-bats.

According to the latest compiled statistics, Pangelinan averaged .611 by hitting 11-for-18 at-bat and joined three other teammates in the Top 15 of the category.

Juan Iguel of the pacesetter Rangers is running second with a .590 clip (13-

for-22) and B.J. Sablan of the Falcons third with his .526 average (10-for-19).

Iguel also has the most runs scored so far with 15. He went 1-for-5 with a single run in the Rangers' 7-4 victory over defending champion Rock Steady last Wednesday night, bringing his total runs to 16.

Inside the Top 5 are reigning MVP Tyron Omar of rookie team Young Guns with his .500 (9-for-18) at fourth and John Acosta of the D-9ers with his .480 (12-for-25) at fifth.

The lower half of the Top 10 includes sixth Dave Camacho Jr. of the Rangers (.461), seventh Ben Mesa of D-9ers (.454), eighth Henry Iguel Jr.

of Falcons (.450), ninth Byron Kaipat of Rock Steady (.444), and 10th Jeff Tenorio of D-9ers (.434).

Jun Hyuk Jang of Korean Phoenix is 11th (.421), J.D. Dikito, Falcons, 12th (.416), Manny Sablan, Rock Steady, 13th (.391), Bob Lizama, D-9ers, 14th (.384), and Jess Mesa, Tigers, 15th (.347).

Pete Tomokane of the Rangers has the most doubles with five and teammate Dave Camacho has the most triples with three.

So far only three players have hit a homerun—B.J. Sablan, J.D. Dikito, and Ben Taisacan.

B.J. Sablan is pacing the field in most RBIs with 11. Ben Mesa had nine and Byron Kaipat made eight.

See PANGELINAN on Page 26

## Docomo clinches title of Budweiser caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO  
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REPORTER



Docomo Pacific secured the championship in the 2008-2009 BANMI/Budweiser Basketball League after outlasting Ol'Aces in the title match, 88-80, Friday at the Garapan Basketball Court.

Docomo came out in the title game with faster legs and more stamina to beat a cramping and foul-troubled Ol'Aces team to wrap up the season early. Had Ol'Aces won, they could have forced a Game 2 and gain another chance for the championship. Docomo had a twice-to-beat advantage going into Friday's finals after sweeping its first three games in the playoffs.

Ol'Aces had an opportunity to win Game 1, as they led by as much as 13 points in the third period, 51-38, with Freddie Pelisamen finally finding his mark in the second half.

Pelisamen struggled in first half, as he was not used to playing in a hard court, making only a field goal after 20 minutes of play. In the second half, Pelisamen made Ol'Aces' first basket and at one time scored 10

straight points to give his team its biggest lead.

But Docomo recovered midway in the third behind Kelvin Fital, Mark Wallace, and Ryan Sanciangco. The trio teamed up in Docomo's 19-8 scoring for about four minutes with Wallace's three-point play putting the team in the lead, 58-57, with less than a min-

See DOCOMO on Page 26



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Docomo's James Villacrusis, right, goes for a left-handed layup against Ol'Aces' Freddie Pelisamen during their title game in the Budweiser caging Friday night at the Garapan Basketball Court.